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Everybody's Magazine

March

"The Government of a Great City"
BIRD S. COLER.

"Photography as a Fine Art"
CHARLES H. CAFFIN.

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OUTSHINES
THEM ALL
E. MORGANS' SONS
N.Y.
SAPOLIO
If all the pans in this great round world
Into one big pan we could make—
If all the cakes of Sapolio
Could be made into one big cake,
And we polished the pan 'til it shone like the stars,
The learned astronomers yonder in Mars,
Would announce that the radiant, wonderful light,
From a new planet gleamed—more dazzlingly bright
Than the sun.
And the Martians would read in the ambient glow,
The name of the new star—"Sapolio"

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A PORTRAIT, BY J. CRAIG ANNAN.
Photography as a Fine Art."

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EVERYBODY'S MAGAZINE

VOL. IV. MARCH, 1901. No. 19.

COPY OF THE EARLIEST SUNLIGHT PICTURE OF A HUMAN FACE, TAKEN IN 1840.

PHOTOGRAPHY AS A FINE ART.

THE DEVELOPMENT AND PRESENT STATUS OF THE PHOTOGRAPH.

BY CHARLES H. CAFFIN.

WITH PHOTOGRAPHIC EXAMPLES FROM THE EARLIEST PORTRAIT TO THE WORKS OF J. CRAIG ANNAN.

[This is the first of a most interesting series of articles, in which Mr. Caffin endeavors to show, for the first time, just what standing photography has won for itself as a Fine Art. It is largely taken up with an historical summing-up and a general view of the subject, but future papers will deal directly with the work of the men and women whose personality and artistic feeling have made possible the present pictorial photography. The next article, for instance, will treat of Mr. Alfred Stieglitz, who has undoubtedly led the movement in America.]

CAN photography be reckoned among the fine arts?

The great French painter, Paul Delaroche, seeing an example of Daguerre's new light-pictures, is said to have exclaimed, "Painting is dead." So far the prophecy has not been fulfilled; and it is safe to say that painting has less to fear from the competition of photography than from its own overproductiveness. The interest of the remark, therefore, consists in this—that Delaroche instinctively recognized in the new invention qualities and possibilities which would ultimately bring it within the pale of the other fine arts. It is a belief that has been cherished by photographers from the start, and it is the object of the present article to

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trace, first, the development of this belief into practice, and then, to consider the possibilities and limitations of photography for picture-making and the salient characteristics of picture-photography as aimed at or reached by the advanced photographers.

It is not always good to be heralded into the world with a flourish of trumpets, and the exaggerated expectations which the public formed regarding Daguerre's invention aroused the suspicion and animosity of the painters. This changed to contemptuous indifference as it began to be understood that photography had its limitations. The pendulum had swung to the opposite extreme, and the art side was ignored and the process dismissed into the limbo of chemistry and mechanics. The one attitude was as unreasonable as the other. Moreover, photography as an art fell upon evil times; it was seized and exploited for money-eyed ends, and its artistic possibilities became obscured by commercialism. With the usual interacting of cause and effect, the photographers aimed to please the public, and the latter accepted their work as representative of the art at its best. Dip into the family album of fifteen years ago; you will see the mediocrity that prevailed under these conditions. Here and there a print will record a good likeness; but, for the most part, appear examples of persons, posed in painful attitudes, amid surroundings execrable in their ugliness; the faces purged of every blemish and presenting surfaces as smooth and unlifelike as a fresh cake of soap. Or one's researches may be carried further into that realm of bathos, peopled with the make-believes of the pictorial photographer; models, clad in cheese-cloth, masquerading as angels, madonnas, fairies or classic heroines, or the thousand and one "creations" of the uncultivated photographer, who either had no sense of humor or carried his tongue in his cheek at the credulity of the public.

EXAMPLES OF THE PHOTOGRAPHIC ART OF THE FIFTIES.

Daguerreotypes stiff in character and awkward in arrangement. They were mounted in gilt frames and generally enclosed in plush or leather cases.

Yet it would be unjust to dwell too insistently on these points, still more so to saddle photography with the entire responsibility for its own shortcomings. The period under notice was one of banality in all the arts. A few names of painters and sculptors stand out as eminences, but for the most part the two arts showed a dead-level of mediocrity. This is as true of Europe, with its uninterrupted traditions,

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A TYPICAL PORTRAIT OF THE SIXTIES.

At this period photographs were usually made about the same size as these reproductions, and were mounted on small cards.

as of America, which was just commencing its art-consciousness. And it is equally true to say that, although higher standards are understood and recognized, a vast mass of pictures and sculpture is annually produced which has no reason for existence except that it is made to sell. Its motive is commercial, and commercialism its only justification. But both these arts have a noble past and dignified traditions, which a faithful few are resolute to maintain, while photography is even now engaged in establishing its dignity and in storing for itself traditions. All the while a few enthusiasts, disregarding the allurements of popularity and full of belief in the possibilities of their craft, have steadily worked to produce photographs which shall appeal to the cultivated judgment as truly pictures.

For a time the Photographic Society of Great Britain, now known as "The Royal," afforded at its annual exhibitions opportunity for the display of artistic work by photographers in all parts of the world. It conferred awards, and the highest was regarded as the Blue Ribbon of the art. Gradually, however, the Society "grew lax in its methods and did not insist on the highest standard." The earliest protest arose in Vienna, when certain photographers, braving the sneers of the conservatives, organized, in 1889, the Viennese Photographic Salon. Its success was so pronounced that it brought to a head the discontent felt in England with the unprogressiveness of "The Royal"; the result being a secession of some of the members and the formation of the now famous "Linked Ring." This differed from the Viennese Salon in two important respects. While the Salon had adopted a system of awards the "Ring" dropped them altogether, determining to maintain a standard so high that the mere admission of a picture to the exhibitions should be in itself an award of honor. Again, the Salon had entrusted the selection of pictures to a jury of painters; the "Ring" reverted to a jury of photographers; for it argued, quite reasonably, that the latter were, or ought to be, as capable of judging the pictorial qualities of a picture as the painters are; that they, moreover, understood the technical possibilities and limitations, while the painters did not, and, still further, that they regarded photography in all seriousness, which, as yet, it was not at all certain that painters, as a class, did. The "Ring," then, was formed to uphold the highest possible standards in picture-photography, and,

A COMPANION PORTRAIT OF THE SAME PERIOD.

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A STIFF MODERN PHOTO.

The style of print which has passed for fine work in the best galleries.

being anxious to avoid the least chance of itself falling by degrees into set grooves, it refused to shackle itself with a constitution or even to have officers. Originally composed of some thirty members of various nationalities, it has grown, through the election of those who have made distinguished showing at its exhibitions, to rather more than double that number; including in its membership the following Americans: Alfred Stieglitz, R. Eickemeyer, Jr., F. Holland Day, Joseph T. Keiley, Clarence H. White, and Mrs. Gertrude Käsebier, who is the first lady to have been enrolled.

BUCOLIC PHOTOGRAPHY.

An excellent representation of the photographic art as practised in the smaller towns.

The example of this annual Photographic Salon was followed shortly in Vienna, Paris, Hamburg, Munich, and other European cities;

AN "ARTISTIC" PORTRAIT.

A favorite pose of the professional artist.

PROFESSIONAL "HIGH ART."

This photograph was awarded the prize in a Beauty contest in Paris.

"till, finally, pictorial photography came to be taken seriously by the continental Art Societies and Academies, and to-day the

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principal photographic exhibitions are held under their auspices, and in several art centres the leading art museums have established permanent exhibitions of original photographs of real artistic merit and value, and have set aside a fund for the purchase of the same." The latest salon, the Philadelphia Photographic Salon, was organized under the joint direction of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts and the Photographic Society of Philadelphia in 1898.

Up to this time there had been no dearth of photographic societies in the United States, or of exhibitions; but their artistic standards were poor, for the facilities of the cheap camera had been and still are prolific of mediocrity. Even the joint annual exhibitions, held in turn at New York, Philadelphia, and Boston from 1884 to 1894, which were modelled to some extent on the Photographic Society of Great Britain, gave no encouragement to the principles and efforts of the advanced photographers. The latter have been represented in this country by a small and steadily increasing group of earnest workers, whose work will form the subject of subsequent articles in this series. For the present, it is enough to say that their leader has been Alfred Stieglitz, well known throughout the photographic world, who has been closely identified with each stage in the development of the art during the past fifteen years. Both in his pictures and in his writings, as well as by his personal influence, he has, little by little, in face of a dead inertia of indifference and of the more active opposition of misconception and ridicule, upheld the hands of the artistic photographers and won recognition for the art. The result of his efforts in this country has been the establishment of the Philadelphia Photographic Salon, at which no awards are made, admission to the exhibition being held sufficient honor; while the test of selection is that the work, to be accepted, must show "distinct evidence of individual artistic feeling and execution." It remains to be seen whether the management of these exhibitions will have enough courage of its convictions to maintain this principle. If there is any wobbling of purpose, and the high standard now professed is for any reason relaxed, the exhibitions will immediately lose all claim upon serious consideration. On the other hand, the character of the best work in this country is so good that, with staunchness to principles and patience under opposition, the Philadelphia Salon may soon become the most distinguished in the world.

Such is a brief account of the movement that has been started and maintained by the vanguard of photographers to make the picture-photograph pictorial in the highest sense. It remains now to describe the characteristics of the best picture-photographs, and, incidentally, to touch upon the possibilities and limitations of photography in this direction.

There are two distinct roads in photography—the utilitarian and the æsthetic; the goal of the one being a record of facts, and of the other an expression of beauty. They run parallel to each other, and many crosspaths connect them. Examples of utilitarian photographs are those of machinery, of buildings and engineering works, of warscenes and daily incidents used in illustrated papers, of a large majority of the views taken by tourists, and of the greater number of portraits. In all these the operator relies upon the excellence of his camera, and in developing and printing aims primarily at exact definition. Examples of the intermediate class are photographs of paintings, sculpture, and architecture, which, while first of all useful as records of works of art, are treated with so much skill and feeling for the beauty of the originals that they have an independent value as being themselves things of beauty. Preëminent in this class is the portrait, which gives a truthful record of the individual's characteristics, at the same time being so handsome as a picture that we enjoy it apart from any consideration of its being a good likeness. Lastly, there is the photograph whose motive is purely æsthetic: to be beautiful. It will record facts, but not as facts; it will even ignore facts if they interfere with the conception that is kept in view; just as Corot in his paintings certainly recorded the phenomena of morning and twilight skies and just as certainly left out a number of facts which must have confronted him as he sat before the scene, his object being not to get at facts, but to express the emotions with which the facts affected him.

The point to be noted is that, while in the first class the photographer succeeds by mechanical and scientific means, in the two latter he must also have sympathy, imagina-

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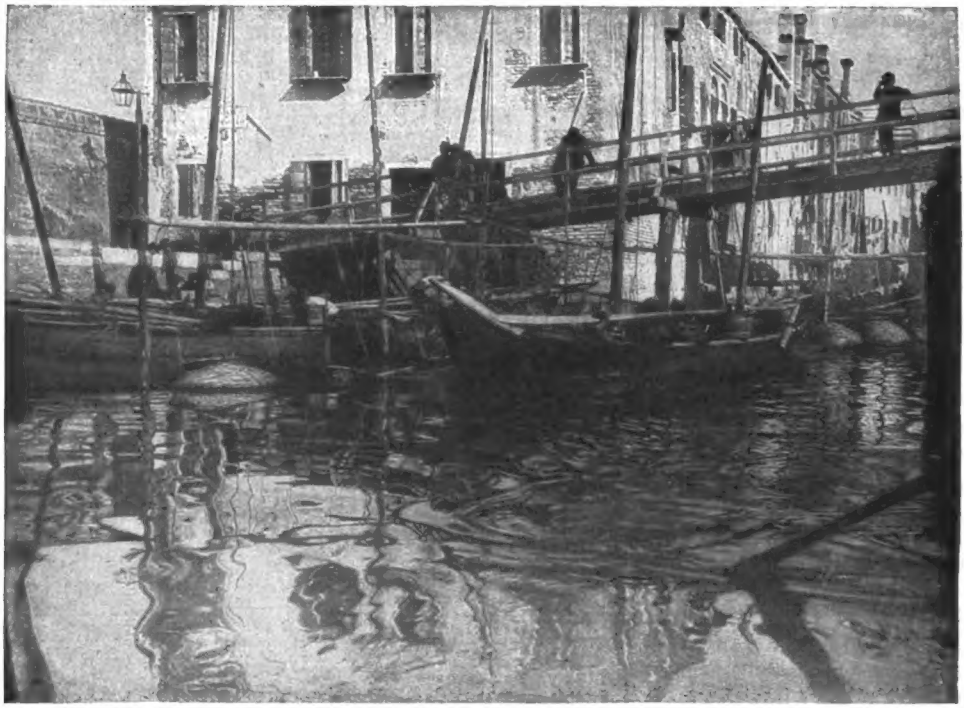

THE BLACK CANAL, BY J. CRAIG ANNAN.

An excellent example of the possibility of obtaining unusual effects in photography. The treatment of the water has the value of a fine etching.

tion, and a knowledge of the principles upon which painters and photographers alike rely to make their pictures. He must understand the laws of composition, those also which affect the distribution of light and shade; his eye must be trained to distinguish "values," that is to say, the varying effect of light upon objects of different material and the gradual changes in the color of an object according as it is nearer to or farther from the eye. These involve technical knowledge which may be acquired; in addition there must be the instinctive sense of what is beautiful in line and form and color, which may be developed by study, and, lastly, the natural gift of imagination which conceives a beautiful subject and uses technique and instinct to express it. The contention of what we have called the "advanced" photographers is that these qualities of temperament and training must be brought to the making of a picture-photograph. They are identical with the equipment of a painter, except that he learns to use color and, if he is a true colorist, thinks in color. But no stress need be laid on this exception; for, in its present inability to reproduce color, photography stands alongside of etching; nor must we forget that a good black-and-white, though it does not state the colors of a scene, has a power of suggesting them, which also reminds me that sculptors speak of a statue as being good in "color" when they wish to commend its distribution of light and shade. So we reach the point that the most important difference between the painter and the photographer is in their respective tools. While the former uses a brush or knife or his own thumb to cover his canvas, a needle to scratch his etching, or a burin to engrave his plate, the latter uses a dark-box with a lens in the front of it. The painter who affects to despise photography—except, by the way, as a short cut for obtaining studies of his models—might condone the dark-box, just as he has been accustomed to paint nature's sunlight while sitting within the four walls of his studio, lighted from the sunless north; but he calls a halt on the lens. That is mechanical, substituting a soulless eye for the artist's individual vision.

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THE SAND DUNES, BY J. CRAIG ANNAN.

A particularly successful and sincere specimen of modern pictorial photographic art.

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The reader will notice that this objection involves two propositions: first, that the camera is mechanical; secondly, that the use of it prevents the artist's individual vision. We may admit the one without subscribing to the other. Undoubtedly the camera is mechanical, and that is the limitation under which the photographer labors. But every art has its limitations. The architect is confronted with problems of construction, with local conditions and the need of satisfying required utilities—all of which hamper the freedom of his artistic invention. The conscientious painter laments the inadequacy of pigments to express what he sees and feels, and, except in rare instances, finds the handling of his brush an obstacle to freedom of expression; while the sculptor knows better than any one the difficulty of manifesting life and movement in inert marble or bronze. Each art is shackled with material fetters, and the pride of the artist is in rising despite them. With brush and pigments the painter-artist can accomplish something infinitely superior to the work of the house-decorator. Is he blind to the immeasurably superior results reached by the artist-photographer over him who merely relies upon the mechanical facilities of the camera?

We shall better appreciate these results by thoroughly realizing the limitations which the camera imposes. They make themselves felt particularly in figure-work. Consider the simplest case, where the picture is to consist of a single figure. Both painter and photographer work from a model; but the former can correct, modify, and, above all, put into the face such expression as the subject demands. The photographer, on the contrary, though he may talk the subject into his model's brain, may find himself disappointed of success by the impossibility to make the model express it. Particularly is this true of the regular professional model, who, ordinarily, is not expected to do any thinking, and who is also apt to be too sophisticated to assume even a natural expression. It is in this respect that children afford the happiest results, especially if they can be caught, as it were, in their free wildness. The difficulties hinted at in the single-figure composition are increased in the case of groups. Rarely does one see a photograph, containing many figures, in which the lines retain their suppleness throughout the composition or in which there is a complete uniformity of feeling pervading the whole picture, unless the group is treated in the middle-distance rather than the foreground. It is in this way that the prudent photographer often prefers to use figures, or he will rely upon the movement rather than the expression. Especially, he is inclined to make the motive of his composition decorative, using the human figure as part of an ornamental arrangement of lines and masses of light and shade. What we have said of the figure-picture is practically true of the portrait. The painter enjoys the opportunity of studying his subject's character and characteristic pose and expression in many sittings, and can gradually elaborate the record of what he sees, striving to make it comprehend or suggest the many-sidedness of his subject. This, however, is a great gift, and few there be that find it; but it constitutes the grandeur of the great portraits of the world. I have heard of a photographer inviting to his studio some one whose portrait he wished to take, and on many occasions in the unrestraint of conversation studying his characteristics, and then one day, by a little ruse, securing a negative-plate when the subject thought it was something at his side that was being photographed. But this is obviously impracticable as a rule, and the photographer must ordinarily rely upon quickness of sympathy and comprehension, upon his ability to cultivate confidence at short notice, and the power of rapid decision as to pose and lighting, so that he saves the sitter the oppressive feeling of being operated upon. One can imagine the difficulty of this, and it is surprising how the best photographers surmount it. There is another side to the portrait, which is that, besides being a good likeness, it may be a beautiful picture, and one is inclined to believe that in this respect the photographers succeed more often than the painters. Indeed, one may go even further and assert that, in this country to-day, the portraits by the best photographers attain a higher average of all-round excellence than those by the best painters.

From what has been said it may be gathered that in photography the hardest of all figure-subjects is the study from the nude. Except in the case of children, the modern human form is seldom sufficiently free from defects or able to pose and move naturally without the accustomed restraint of clothing. Still less is the nude model tolerable

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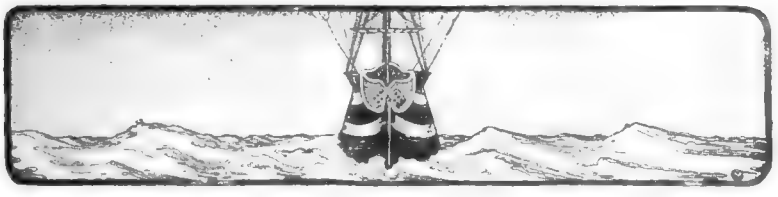
for any subject that involves expression of sentiment. Yet many photographers use it to good effect in subjects distinctly decorative; particularly in statuesque poses and with the emphasis on light and shade.

Another limitation encountered by the photographer arises from the impartiality with which the camera records anything near to it and the misinterpretation it gives to distances; whereas, when, for example, we look at a landscape, our eye, on the one hand, is conscious of successive planes of distance, and, on the other, is unable to grasp more than the salient features. So the landscape taken by an untrained photographer may be a very pleasant reminder of a beautiful spot, but it will not be true to nature, and it will be so crowded with facts as to lack the simplicity and synthesis of pictorial composition; a charge, by the way, which may be brought against many painted landscapes. Before considering how photography surmounts this limitation, let us note that in certain branches of photographic work it is a quality of "value." One has seen, for example, some studies of birds and flowers in which the fulness of detail and suggestion of the actual texture were beautiful in themselves as well as valuable for truth. The painter obtains his synthesis by elimination of the unessential, and massing of the important features. The photographic artist does practically the same. He studies the landscape until he has found the point of view from which it most impresses him; then he discovers the time of day and the atmospheric conditions most conducive to the impression he wishes to record. Perhaps he selects the moment when a broad shadow or a flood of light stretches across the foreground, with the effect of unifying it. Having made his negative, he is able in the processes of developing and printing to control the result —strengthening this part or reducing that until he gets the planes of his picture truthful, and reaches synthesis. In a word, those who have studied the work of the advanced photographers realize their ability to make a picture that is large in conception and beautiful in feeling, notwithstanding the limitations of the camera.

It will be recognized at once that such work as this, in landscape or in figure, demands artistic temperament and training, and involves a large expenditure of time and labor. And now we arrive at a definition of what we have been calling the advanced photographer; he has the former, and is so devoted to his work as to give the latter.

Lastly, can he infuse an individuality into his pictures, as the painter can, making them express his own personal conceptions of beauty? For answer we need only refer you to the work of the best photographers. You will find a kinship of feeling throughout all the examples of any one, so that you would know an isolated example to be by So-and-so, and, on the other hand, that his work differs from that of the others as theirs from one another's. In short, if he has the equipment of an artist and an artistic individuality, the photographer can surmount or evade the limitations of his mechanical tool, the camera, and produce work which, barring colors, has all the characteristics of a beautiful picture.

In a word, Saul also is to be reckoned among the prophets.



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THE OUTLAW

A CHARACTER STUDY OF A BEAVER WHO WAS CAST OUT BY HIS COMPANIONS

BY

A. RADCLYFFE DUGMORE

AUTHOR OF "BIRD HOMES"

[Mr. Dugmore's extraordinary photographs of wild birds and animals in their daily occupations have already attracted much attention. He seems to have a peculiar faculty, like Thoreau, of making friends of all sorts of wild creatures; in two days in the woods, for instance, he will get such a wild bird as a worm-eating warbler so accustomed to him that she will feed her young on his hand, having her picture taken at the same moment! This story is the first of a series which will give "character studies" of different animals with whom he has become acquainted, along with reproductions of the author's surprisingly life-like and interesting photographs. It is the most intimate and illuminating sort of natural history. The pictures reproduced herewith are particularly notable as they are perhaps the first good photographs of beaver ever secured, the nocturnal habits and shyness of these animals making them peculiarly difficult subjects for the animal photographer.]

It would be difficult to imagine a more pathetic sight than that of this poor old beaver, living in a land of many animals and yet so entirely alone; within sight of his comrades, yet not among them; unable to join in their games and their work, living his lonely life like a prisoner, within sight and sound of his fellow-beings, but separated by a barrier as strange as it was secure. This was the animal that appeared after I had been watching for an hour or two in the beaver enclosure at the Washington National Zoo. There was a movement in front of the large burrow opening on the water, and a head peeped cautiously out, to see that all was safe for the owner's regular evening exercise. The sun had long since disappeared behind the hill, and everything had the quiet hush of evening. The deep roaring of the lions and tigers, and the more distant barking of the seals, alone disturbed the silence, when the beaver, believing himself to be alone, plunged noiselessly into the water, dived beneath the log that lay partly submerged but a few feet from the entrance of the burrow, and reappeared in the middle of the small pond.

Almost like a short piece of driftwood he lay, his dark, bead-like eyes gazing intently at me, where I stood in the shadow of a small tree. Observing no movement, and not being of a suspicious nature, he soon swam ashore, and immediately walked, moving for all the world like a large, smoothly coated Canadian porcupine, straight to the corner of the fence that separated him from his relatives. Once there he stood on his hind legs and tail, and with front feet resting on the horizontal bar, he gazed with a longing, wistful expression at the lodge in which the other beavers lived. Never surely was loneliness shown more eloquently than by this animal as he stood there, the very picture of solitude. For ten minutes he remained thus, motionless except when, as though no longer able to endure his misery, he would bite the hard, cold bars of iron, as he had bitten them every evening during

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"FOR ALL THE WORLD LIKE A LARGE, SMOOTHLY COATED CANADIAN PORCUPINE."

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THE OUTLAW.

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three long weary months. Did he imagine that, perhaps, some day he would find the bars had softened and would yield to his chisel-edged teeth?—teeth that, were he in his native wilds, would work their way through anything save the stones or the cruel metal of the steel trap.

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"HE WOULD BITE THE HARD, COLD BARS OF IRON."

Wishing to examine more closely this interesting animal, I approached quietly, hoping not to disturb him; but he felt uncertain of my intentions, and before I had lessened the distance between us by more than a few steps, he dropped on all-fours, and after regarding me curiously for a minute or two, turned and made for the water. Once there he felt more secure. Usually at the least sign of danger he would slap the water loudly with his large, flat tail as a warning to his friends, and then instantly disappear from view and retreat to the privacy of his gloomy burrow. This time, as

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THE BEAVER ENCLOSURE AT THE WASHINGTON NATIONAL ZOO.

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"HE DISCOVERED A NICE GREEN STICK ON WHICH SOME OF THE BARK STILL REMAINED."

the danger did not appear to be imminent, he contented himself with diving silently, coming to the surface at the farther side of the pond, from which place he watched me.

Soon, however, his curiosity got the better of his natural timidity, and he swam back toward his regular landing-place, which was as clearly defined as an otter's slide. He swam slowly, stopping repeatedly as though in doubt of his visitor's intentions. Suddenly, and with no apparent reason, he concluded there was no cause for fear, and immediately came forward, landing within two feet of where I stood. Once on shore, he again doubted the wisdom of his course and hesitated, not quite liking to pass so near a human being. Sitting half erect on his hind legs, with his small forepaws held close beneath his chin, he carefully watched me, while his nose moved slowly, as though he were trying to scent an enemy.

A few minutes sufficed for this examination, by which we established a certain degree of mutual confidence at once pleasing and useful, for I hoped on the following day to take a few photographs of this newly acquired friend, and of course it is highly desirable that one should be on a footing of

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"GAZED WITH A LONGING, WISTFUL EXPRESSION AT THE LODGE IN WHICH THE OTHER BEAVERS LIVED."

trust with one's model, especially when the latter has the retiring disposition of the beaver. It was rapidly becoming dark—too dark, indeed, for me to distinguish much more than the general form of the animal; so I left him to his thoughts, intending to visit him again before the next setting of the sun.

When the beavers were brought to the Zoo, they were given for their new home an enclosure of perhaps two acres. This was part of a very small but well-wooded valley, through which ran a stream of insignificant size. It was so small that the beavers were unable to swim in it, so they immediately commenced building a dam. To do this, the trees, which up to this time were unprotected, were felled by these industrious little wood-cutters and engineers, and the branches cut into convenient lengths, so that they could be pushed or carried to the scene of their operations. These branches

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formed the main part of the dam, while mud and roots, dredged from the bottom of the stream, were used to fill in the holes, and render the entire structure water-tight. The upper part was carefully covered with mud, which was carried there in the animals' hands. To realize fully how much work this required, one must see for himself this dam, which contains probably more than thirty tons of material.* It was soon found necessary to protect the trees still remaining uncut (no tree of ordinary size is safe from the beaver's teeth, stumps of trees, two feet in diameter, being frequently found cut down by them), and these were covered near their base with heavy wire netting. But the beavers, nothing daunted, succeeded in cutting into the wood in spite of this precaution; so the netting, supported by iron rods, was finally placed at a distance of several inches from the tree-trunk. In this way the trees were saved, but the beavers still needed building material, as the dam was not yet large enough to make their pond as they wished it. More branches were therefore supplied, and cartful after cartful was used up before the main dam and the three auxiliary dams were completed. It was late summer by this time, and there was still a house to be built, and that, too, with as little delay as possible. With the arrival of cold weather all building operations must cease, as the mud becomes frozen and too hard to work. The house, or lodge, as it is more properly named, is outwardly a great mass of loose sticks, some of which from their size might be called logs, filled in with earth and roots, and plastered over with mud. In the centre there is less mud, the sticks and twigs forming a partly closed flue, which serves as a ventilator. Inside the house all is darkness: the walls are rough, but the floor, which is raised a few inches above the level of the water, is firm and smooth, of fine twigs beaten into the earth. The entrances, for there are usually two or more, are several feet beneath the surface of the water. What impresses one on seeing the lodge and dams built by the beavers in the Zoo is the fact that in no way do they differ from those found in the most remote parts of Canada.

With the arrival of spring it was found that the beavers had increased in numbers, very much to the delight of all concerned; but the following year, when they were all full-grown, the rules and regulations of Beaverdom were put in force. It was decided that there was one beaver too many, and according to their laws, he must either betake himself to some other locality or submit to an untimely death. Now, the victim chosen—whether by ballot or by what other means, who shall say?—was our old friend, and, as it was impossible for him to leave the colony of his own accord, death would have been his lot had he not been saved by the keeper. For a short time he was kept in a cage, until a suitable place could be made ready, and the place selected was the enclosure in which I found him leading his lonely life.

Being a solitary bachelor, he had not as yet gone in for regular housekeeping—perhaps he thinks it scarcely worth while building a house until he has a mate. As it is, he has made a burrow in the bank with the entrance at the level of the water. In this he spends his days, seldom coming out at all before sunset, and frequently much later. On leaving his underground house he invariably goes directly to the fence corner, where he stands watching his former companions for as much as half an hour at a time. They, on the contrary, seldom pay the least attention to him.

On the occasion of my second visit I brought my camera, though I was told how little chance there was of being able to secure photographs of him, and certainly the conditions were far from being favorable. It was nearly five o'clock (November 1st) before he made his appearance, and then, as on the previous day, after emerging from his underground home, he lay, log-like, on the water, taking in the situation before venturing ashore.

After satisfying himself that all was well, he landed, and walking past the camera (which had been placed in position on the chance of his following his usual routine), took his place at the fence corner. There he stood erect as on the previous day, watching vainly for his old playmates, who had not yet made their appearance. From their lodge came the sound of muffled voices: evidently they were holding an animated conversation in beaver language. It is a strange-sounding tongue, like a mixture of subdued children's voices and the crying of a very young puppy. Whether or not our

* This is but a rough guess, and is probably far short of the actual amount.

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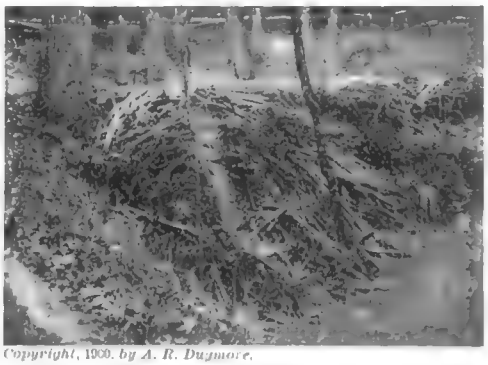
beaver understood the drift of their discussion would be difficult to say, but certain it is that he seemed to be very much interested by it all.

While he stood there, showing no sign of movement, I was able to make several exposures, bringing the camera nearer each time. When within about five feet he turned round to examine the queer one-eyed machine that approached so quietly on its three legs. Evidently he was puzzled, without being frightened, for after a few seconds' deliberation he decided to satisfy his curiosity by coming straight for the camera, slowly at first and hesitating slightly at each step. Each leg of the tripod was carefully scrutinized and found to be harmless; so, resting his hands on one of the tripod legs, he raised himself and took a good look at the camera itself. His nose must have discovered some new odor, for he sniffed at it first on one side, then on the other.



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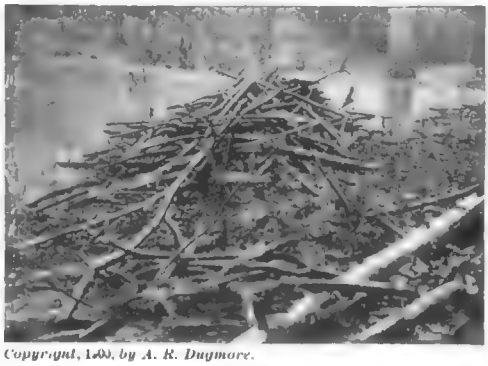
THE BEAVER'S LODGE.

Presently his attention was attracted to the rubber ball belonging to the shutter. This was swinging at the end of the tube, and he thought that, perhaps, it was something new in the way of food. In another moment the bulb would have been rendered useless, as it would have been quickly punctured by his sharp teeth. At this critical moment I had to interfere, very much to the old chap's disgust.

Wishing to make friends with this strange animal, I sat down near the camera. At once he came so close that I could put my hand on his soft, furry back, wondering at the same time what would happen if he should take it into his head to use his teeth, for with their extraordinary strength and sharpness the amputation of a finger or two would have been the work of but an instant. There was, however, no need of fear, as he was a very well-meaning old fellow, and contented himself with walking slowly round me, stopping occasionally to sit on his hind legs and take a general survey of the curious being who went about with such a queer three-legged companion.

Satisfied that he might safely leave me for a short while, he went to his corner, and after looking for a few minutes at his neighbors, who were swimming about in their pond, he walked down his path to the water's edge, and in his own peculiar, noiseless way plunged in. Very soon he discovered a nice green stick upon which some of the bark still remained. This he brought into shallow water, and holding it with his two front paws (hands they should perhaps be called), proceeded to make a meal off the bark. This may seem a very unsatisfactory sort of supper, yet he enjoyed it. But a few minutes were required to strip the stick, after which, as he had no house to build, it served no further use and was left in the water, while the animal swam round the pond, making a tour of investigation, which resulted in his finding nothing more that was suited to his taste. So coming ashore, near where I stood, he commenced his evening toilet.



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"THE LODGE IS OUTWARDLY A MASS OF LOOSE STICKS."

This was an interesting sight to watch. To begin with, instead of sitting with his large, flat, ribbed tail protruding behind him, he tucked it forward between his hind legs and sat upon it. Then with his hand he carefully combed his long hair, using both hands at the same time. There were many places, however, that could not be

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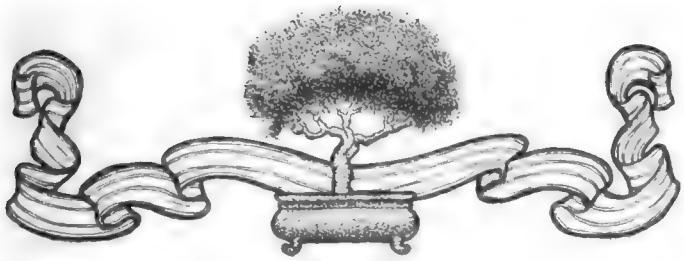
reached in this way, for his arms are very short and his body very large; so he combed these otherwise inaccessible places with his *hind feet*, using first one and then the other. The entire operation was performed with the utmost deliberation and care, and occupied more than a quarter of an hour, so that by the time it was completed daylight had almost vanished. My presence did not appear to disturb him in the least, though I sat on the ground within three feet of him, that I might the better note his various attitudes, for it is not often one has an opportunity of watching a beaver at such close range.

He had just completed his toilet when the night-watchman, whose duty it is to feed the nocturnal animals, arrived with a basket of stale bread and fresh vegetables. These he threw into the enclosure, the vegetables on the bank and the bread into the water. Mr. Beaver well understood the meaning of these splashes, and as soon as the keeper had disappeared he plunged into the water, utterly regardless of his newly dried jacket, over which he had taken so much trouble, and seizing one of the half-loaves of bread in his hands, swam to a shallow part of the pond to eat it. He first held the loaf in his hands, much after the manner in which a squirrel holds a nut; but the soaked bread fell apart, so he made a bowl of his hands and lapped the wet crumbs out of it. In this way not a particle was lost.

Piece after piece of bread was eaten in this manner, when he came ashore and made short work of the carrots and potatoes. It was quite dark by this time, and as it was impossible to see anything more, I was obliged to leave him, with the hope that in the near future I might continue the acquaintance so pleasantly begun. By that time, let us hope, he will no longer be solitary, but will have taken to himself a mate whose disposition will be as good as his own; then a house will be built, and the two will live as well-regulated and happy beavers—and human beings—should.



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IN THE DRAGON'S MOUTH.

A STORY OF THE BOXER UPRISING.

By Adèle Marie Shaw.

I.

Der Zlati Kohout
(Otherwise Der Goldne Hohn),
Near the Westbahnhof, Prag, *April* 1, 1900.

Dear Forbes:

Cabled you yesterday to do as you like about the mortgages.

Spent the day with Habermeyer. His facile hypocrite of a servant (Bohemian) got me a carriage—Bohemian coachman. I gave him double fare and he dropped me at the wrong station and fled. By the time I'd found him out and driven to this forsaken hole of a village, the Nuremberg train was gone.

If you never see me again, search the environs of the Golden Rooster for an April fool. Nick.

This letter, written an hour before, lay on a table in one of the musty chambers of the inn, and beside it an envelope hurriedly torn open.

Nicholas Rhoades unstrapped his bag, produced a cable form, filled it in, added a few words to the letter, and set himself to the study of his railway guide.

He was a quiet man, and his expression as he followed the lines of the guide betrayed no excitement. He knew he was acting on insufficient evidence, but he did not care. He loved Frederica Drake. She was on her way to the East in her brother's yacht, and what he had overheard since the writing of the note had convinced him that a party of Russians had designs on that yacht. His cable read:

"Plans changed. Wire me five thousand to Pekin."

When he had finished with the guide he lighted a cigar, blew out his candle, and made pictures in the dark—pictures of his rival in all the myriad opportunities of a long sea voyage. The morbid modesty that had driven him away from the woman he loved, hurt and hopeless under the brisk fire of her friendly wit, gave a poignant reality to the pictures. In his pocket was a newspaper clipping.

"Mr. Paul Srocovitch will accompany Mr. Willis Drake on his Eastern cruise," it said. "'Mr. Paul Srocovitch' is understood, in the 'inner beatitudes' of those social circles where he is so great a favorite, to be only another name for a young Russian nobleman, Count Tv—k, who has already distinguished himself by his services to his government. He is the warm friend of Mr. Willis Drake, and his engagement to the sister, though denied by their father, Mr. Frederic Drake, is nevertheless suspected to be a fact."

In the room above Nicholas Rhoades's, two men were seated side by side at the table, their heads bent over a piece of paper. On the paper was a fragmentary map scrawled hastily in pencil, with three places distinctly indicated. The pencillings read: "Camp at Pov.," "Kwan-ho," and "Ku'-an-lino." Near the last were the words, "Wait here." The three places were marked upon the banks of two rivers that forked between "Camp at Pov." and "Kwan-ho."

The man who held the pencil pointed with it as he talked. The other listened with the immovable attention of a private before his colonel. They spoke in Russian.

"How do you know the fellow in the Gast-stube did not understand us?"

"I had tried him with a question. He did not reply till I had changed the words to French." (Rhoades had not heard the question until it was repeated.)

The superior removed his gaze from his companion's face, and fixed it again upon the map. Between "Kwan-ho" and "Camp at Pov." he bored a black spot on the unoccupied bank of the river.

"This is the elevation," he said. "On it to place a gun and a small garrison—that is the task. To run our own boat up the Ama-Songa is not safe. But the American boat will not be remarked. It is a pleasure boat—no more. The count is on board. He will attend to getting the party away. You will obey him absolutely. Be ready with the men. When the party has left the yacht you will overpower those who remain behind, and reach the camp quickly.

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The gun will be transported without your help, but you will see that the yacht is returned and in its original place at the hour the count will name. Listen carefully. The plan, though small, is important. The hill, which is cone-shaped, commands the whole region. The uprising will without doubt be soon. When it comes we are in the best position to save life. When it is over we retain the position. The right bank of the Ama-Songa is ours. The plan is *his*—there is no authority for it beyond—and with *him* we rise or fall. It is necessary that one be cautious. We will destroy this——"

But a lively whisk of wind had seized the paper.

In Rhoades's room and in the room of the Russians there had been made a similar arrangement of doors and windows. Two windows and a glass door were open in each. The windows faced the street. The glass doors gave upon balconies that surrounded a court.

Rhoades's chair was tilted back against a casing of his door, and the foggy air drew strongly across his face. With a gust came a flutter of something white floating down from above. Meeting the draught of the opening, it sucked inward and fell into his lap.

Mechanically he closed his left hand over it and felt the crackle of paper. For a moment he was half unconscious of what he had grasped. Then he rose, as at a sudden thought, relighted his candle, and spread the thin, smooth surface of the half sheet upon the table. It was the map.

"If I don't catch them at Pekin it will be a cross-country run to Ku'an-lino," he muttered, as his eye caught the injunction, "Wait here."

There was a stir in the chamber overhead. Rhoades blew out the candle. A door closed sharply. Thrusting the paper through the balcony rails, he resumed his seat. Steps passed on the landing and descended the flight to the ground floor. Some one moved hastily about the courtyard, and the flash of a match was reflected on the opposite wall.

"Here it is in the mud; I have it," called a suppressed voice.

"Good," answered another.

They were the voices of his neighbors in the Gast-stube.

At Lake Baikal there was a brief delay; an accident hindered Rhoades on the Amur. When he reached Pekin, the "Koloa" had finished her visit to the Gulf of Pe-chi-li, and was steaming out of the Yellow Sea on her way to Vladivostock.

II.

The air blew vigorously across the deck and fluttered the scalloped edges of the awnings. The awnings were rolled taut against their poles, and the sun and breeze had their will without obstruction.

Frederica stood far forward by the rail, and watched the banks and the wide river slipping behind them. Very few boats besides their own broke the ripples. A junk, poking its broad nose above the water like a hippopotamus, was dropping out of sight in their wake, and a half dozen smaller craft, each thrusting ahead a curious wooden feeler, swam placidly near the shores. A long stretch of marshland on either hand glowed in a splendor of bloom. Behind it on one side rose a conical hill, wooded even to its top. The wind that blew in her face brought the odor of wild lilies of the valley.

The river was spreading farther into the marshes, and the pilot had turned the yacht toward the right bank to avoid an island. As they approached, the girl exclaimed aloud. The island rose in red cliffs from the water, and its sandy scales struck back the sun rays in sharp scintillations. From the tufts of green upon its crest a flock of lumbering cranes rose and flapped awkwardly away. The mass of color on the shore resolved itself into red and white and yellow and purple. The odor of the valley lilies grew intolerably sweet, and the reflection of the island wrapped her in a red mist.

"I can't thank you enough for bringing us to this place!" The girl did not turn, but the face of the man who had appeared beside her lighted at her words.

He answered, as she had spoken, in French, taking the glass she offered, and sweeping first one shore, then the other, in quick succession.

"We must be near a village," he said, as he returned it.

The girl raised the glass again to get a nearer view of the poppy fields.

"Then we've passed the frontier?" she asked.

"Oh, yes; when you entered this river here you took me out of my own country."

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The man looked at her happily. It was plainly of her and not of the frontier that he was thinking. He was a young man and very graceful of motion, whether lounging or erect. His manner alternated between the cool polish of the diplomat and a frankness that was genial and engaging. "Then we've passed the Russian camp. I meant to have seen that camp." The girl shaded her eyes from the dazzle of the sun, and bent farther over the rail, watching the cleaving of the current.

"What made you expect to find a camp?" The man frowned a little, waiting.

"Oh, Willis knew. He said there was a regiment at Povorst." The wind had tinged her burned cheeks with a livelier hue, and she sparkled in warmth and color as she looked up at him. "I wanted to see a Russian camp," she repeated. "I know a man who has travelled all over Russia." The color darkened, and she picked up the glass she had dropped and turned it back to the island they had left behind. The island was peacefully receding and bore no sign of life, but her breath came faster as she looked.

"I should like to show you a Russian camp!" There was something impetuous in the man's words; a swift illumination dispelled the shade of troubled abstraction.

"Hi for Ku'an-lino and the Tartar shrine!" shouted a voice from the companion-way.

Willis Drake came up briskly. He was the youngest man of his party, and his yachting clothes suited the jauntiness of his expression.

"If that's the village of Ku'an-lino," he said to Paul, "then your shrine is a fake like Margery Daw. Where's your mountain?"

The Russian laughed as he returned the greeting.

"If there isn't any mountain then that isn't the village," he answered promptly. "Behind my village there is a mountain, and on the mountain there is a shrine. You can see the road leading up to it in a white streak through the woods."

"I wish the sailors could go, too. They've hardly been ashore in a month." Frederica turned to her brother.

"It is better to take as many as possible," the Russian suggested seriously. "The natives are very inquisitive."

"Are they hostile to foreigners up here? Will they throw things at us?" The girl looked amused at the thought. "How do we get there?"

"Walking will be most agreeable, I fancy," Srocovitch replied, "and there is a cabin that belongs to a ginseng hunter, where we can spend the night."

The river was already filling with canoes and flat-bottomed boats, but the villages they passed were separated by long reaches of flowering marsh, and seemed sleepily uninterested. The yacht loitered as near the shore as the channel permitted, and once nearly grounded in the mud. The pilot was admonished, but gave no sign that he understood the rebuke.

It was three o'clock when they came to anchor off Ku'an-lino.

In the chattering crowd on the shore one man was silent. He wore the dress of a Tartar merchant and a disguising beard, but his face showed an unoriental excitement as the yacht came to anchor and the boat was lowered from her side. Rhoades was thinner than when he left Prague, and his expression was sterner. If any one had been observing him instead of the yacht, the disfiguring beard would not have concealed a look of disappointment as two men descended into the boat and set off alone for the shore.

Another stranger was watching on the bank, but Rhoades was some distance in the rear, and had chosen a position where he could easily hide himself if the other turned. The crowd was breaking up. Rhoades's face restored its mask of placid introspection, and he made his way carelessly after the spy.

Ku'an-lino was the principal market of a considerable area. Its streets were more numerous and intricate, and its facilities for concealment greater than those of other villages. The population jostling the bargaining visitors of the outlying region made an ant-like throng, in which it was possible to press unobserved upon another's steps.

Instead of approaching the landing-place, Rhoades continued to follow the other stranger, the spy he had first seen in Prague, and came to a halt with him in the most crowded bazaar. He felt sure that, if his inferences had been correct, the count, whom he had recognized in the boat, would meet this man before returning to the yacht. Suddenly the crowd grew denser. A press

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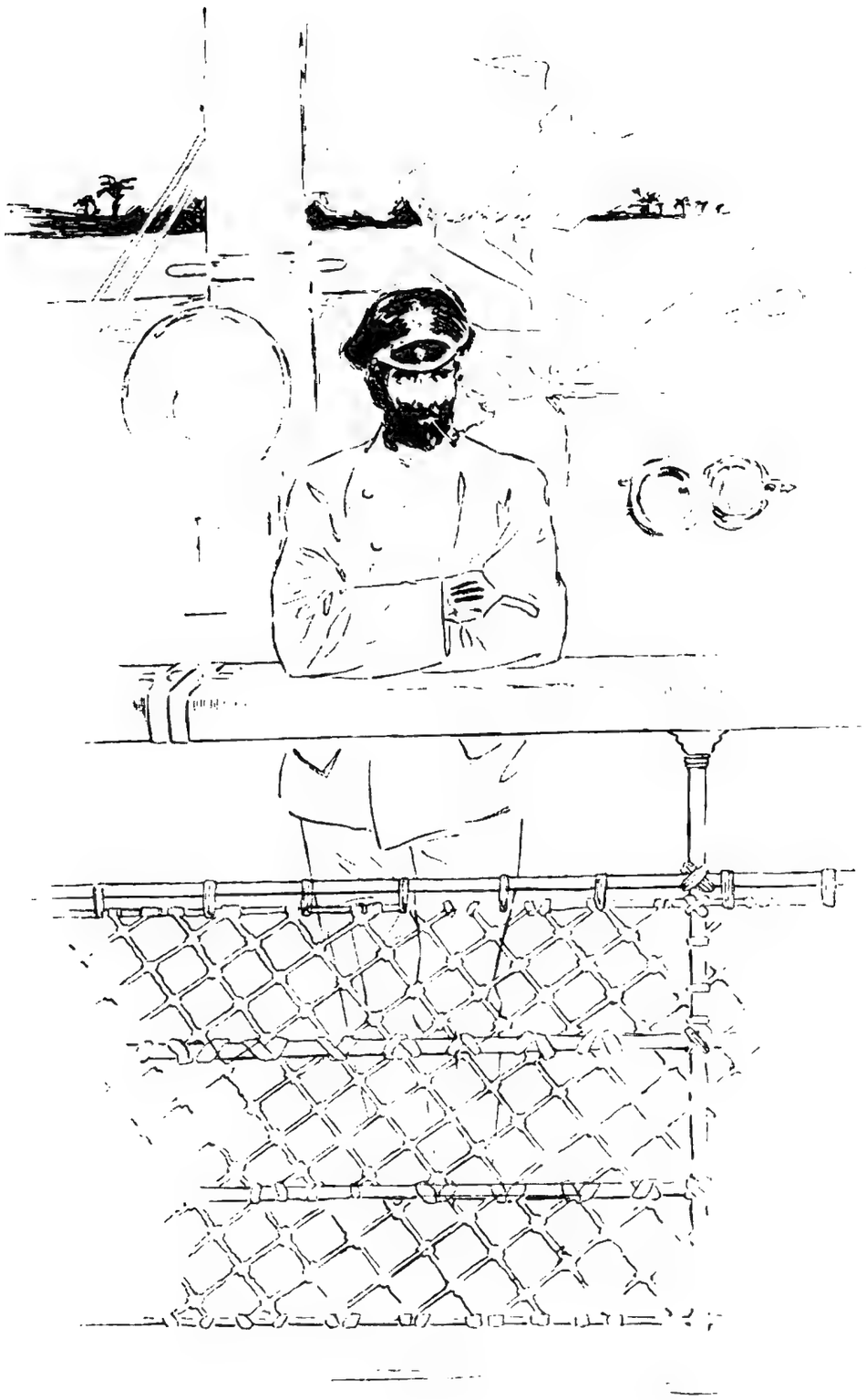

PENRHYN STANLAWS.

PAUL SROCOVITCH.

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of people was accompanying Drake and Srocovitch up from the shore. The Russian perceived the spy, and left his friend, who was loading himself gayly with the trash of the bazaar. The two men met in the thick of the concourse. Curiosity was centred upon Drake, who was gesticulating freely, pretending to drive hard bargains, and then paying ten times the sum charged. A babel had arisen round him.

Nicholas moved nearer, till he was within earshot of the two who were now talking rapidly.

"To-morrow morning. . . . and the men?" Srocovitch was speaking.

"Chiefly natives—a dozen I can depend on—and the pilot you have aboard. The colonel sends the engineers. They are waiting on a small isle and above here—" Rhoades caught no more of the reply, save the phrase, "Shrine of Ku'an-lino."

Paul's next words came in incomplete snatches.

". . . not known at headquarters. If it fails. . ."

"Yes, your Exc—" A sudden movement from the count cut short the title. "How early can you start?" the spy went on. The tone was servile.

"Not before nine. Do nothing till midday. Join us till you see us fairly off. I will explain your presence. Is the country safe?" The man from the yacht put the question earnestly.

"Yes, your—pardon, Excellency. The country is quiet as a church."

"You're sure of that?"

"Perfectly."

"Don't forget—" The count's voice dropped threateningly. ". . . anything touched, the cabins even entered, it will. . ."

Rhoades was pushed aside by a backward movement of the mass of people who were giving way before Drake's determined bodyguard. The Russians separated. Srocovitch rejoined his friend.

"I've found a man who will manage it for us," he reported. "There is very little to be done, he says; just a message ahead to the ginseng hut and a guide for interpreter." As they turned away he called to the spy, in Russian: "Remember—thirty-six hours only!"

Rhoades revolved a dozen plans as he slipped in and out of the mob. Once he stumbled over a dog asleep in the mud, and its owner assailed him with handfuls of filth aimed with all the virulence of the insults they pointed. Nicholas dared not stop to chastise or conciliate, lest he should lose an opportunity he had half determined to seize. His mind was fixed upon the Russian's questions about the safety of the country.

Were he to go as he was on board the yacht, what evidence of the plot had he that could not easily be explained away, and for the danger there was only his word against the Russian's and the spy's. Drake had been seldom at home during the year that he had known the sister. He had actually met no one of the party but Frederica herself. Would the others take his word against their friend's? Would Frederica herself, if the rumor was true, if she was engaged to Srocovitch, believe any better of him than that he was mistaken and officious? But if he could convince Paul Srocovitch, Count Tverdivorsk, that his spy had lied——

Rhoades came full upon the object of his silent discussion before he had decided. The Russian turned sharply as a stranger addressed him. He was for the moment alone; Drake was finishing another bargain.

The American felt his blood seethe at the scrutiny with which he was regarded, but his tone was quiet and courteously insistent.

"I must speak with you, Monsieur. The matter's urgent."

"Ah! What do you wish?" The question was in Russian.

"If Monsieur allows I will speak in French. I am an American and my Russian is indifferent." Rhoades advanced a step.

Srocovitch moved his head in bare assent. His scrutiny became still more coldly interrogative.

"My name is Rhoades, Nicholas Rhoades. You will find that I am known to the Drakes. I come to you first because there is danger, and you, Monsieur, will understand it. The trip you are arranging to the shrine of Ku'an-lino is madness. You have just arrived; you do not know— The whole country is ready to explode. There's not an instant's safety for the life of any foreigner. Not forty miles from here there has been a massacre. The Society's agents are in this village. If you take that party away from the yacht the chances of their ever returning——"

The Russian interrupted.

"How do you know all this?" In spite

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of the distance of the manner, Rhoades saw that he had made an impression.

"I know because I have been here—in this region—for five weeks. Everywhere, among the people, I have seen and heard. Many times I have been pelted. Once a fanatic tried to kill me." He held up his sleeve dripping with mud. "That wasn't five minutes ago," he added. "It is the wave that runs ahead of the Tsai Hwui—the I-Ho-Chu'an."

The other shrugged his shoulders as if shaking off a detaining hand. His glance grew more intent.

"Your trip—is it for pleasure?"

Rhoades's pulses leaped with sudden anger, but for resentment he had no time. His object was too grave.

"That doesn't matter," he replied. "If you wish I will go on board with you—now. It is imperative that you make no expedition, that the yacht leave this place at once."

"The yacht's not mine." Feigned or real, there was indifference in the tone.

"But they will do as you say. Will you help me?" Rhoades's words came fiercely, spurred by the consciousness of a double peril. His appeal brought a moment's pause.

Then the Russian shrugged his shoulders.

"I see no reason for changing our plans," he said.

"Then you will sacrifice your hosts to your plans."

The Russian looked at him with quick suspicion. His voice took on the note of one who wards off a persistent insolence.

"I have consulted men I *know*," he answered. "They tell me it is safe." He turned away and began looking for Drake. Rhoades's next words halted him.

"Whoever told you that lied with an object. Any man here knows the country is not safe." Again he drew nearer and lowered his voice significantly. "If you go—remember more than one expedition may be ruined."

"What do you—" The Russian seemed stung out of his incredulous calm, but he caught the warning glance of the spy, who had appeared beyond them, and broke off his question.

Rhoades saw the look, and saw, too, that his attempt had failed. Turning in the opposite direction, he made his way quickly toward the shore. His best hope now was in reaching the yacht first.

The spy had come close to his superior.

"I know the man; leave him to me," he had said in passing.

Rhoades was some minutes in securing a boat. The natives seemed to take an impish delight in thwarting him; but he succeeded in the end. The men whom he had hired were already beginning to wield their heavy oars, when, at some mysterious summons from the bank, they pushed back into the mud, and, after a hurried conference with the two who had signalled, gave up their places. Rhoades watched the exchange with distrust, his hand at his pocket ready for extortion or violence. The two who had leaped in beside him sent the boat out into the river, then suddenly shipped their oars. Nicholas remonstrated sharply, increasing his offer of money, his eye warily on the foremost. To resort to force would be to bring upon himself the crew of neighboring boatmen, and before he could act he was struck down by a blow from behind. When he came to himself he lay gagged and bound in the bottom of the boat. Of the accomplice, who must have drawn alongside in some other craft, there was no sign.

From his shallow prison Rhoades heard Drake's voice calling from the shore, and as the "Koloa's" launch passed him he bit impotently at the gag. His captors were rowing hastily. After a few minutes he felt that they were backing water, and the boat turned. He caught a glimpse of grasses on either hand. They must have entered a sedgy inlet of the river. He began to understand bits of the men's talk. It betrayed who had given them the order for his seizure. They evidently believed him still unconscious, and they chuckled as they spoke, in gloating anticipation.

"To-morrow." Something was to be to-morrow. "Early—morning." He got that. The whole began to clear itself up. He blessed the diligence with which he had acquired his slender command of the dialect.

The kidnappers still talked busily as they threw him into the sword-edged grass. They were two of the agents of whom he had warned the count; and the Russian spy—ah, that was it—the spy was a cunning fellow. He was himself in the Society's employ, and it was they, the I-Ho-Chu'an, who would appear in time to seize the yacht, and run their reign of terror up and down the Ama-Songa. The treachery was skilful. It relied on the silence of the dead.

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The men were about to begin a search for money; one, feeling in his jacket pockets, had pulled out a handful of the almost worthless copper "cash." Then voices hailed them from the water. They rolled their victim farther out of sight and clambered swiftly into their boat before they answered the hail. Even their chuckling laughter and the shuffle of their slippered feet, and the insufferable odor shaken from their flapping skirts were better than the loneliness of the swamp. Before the launch had reached the shore Rhoades, lying on his side, felt the wet crawling fingers of the stagnant marsh creeping farther and farther upon his shrinking flesh.

III.

The Russian saw with angry impatience that the rest of the party were coming ashore.

"Here we are!" called Mrs. West as they approached. "I'm doing the chaperoning unsupported. Graham wouldn't come. He said we should every one of us get the small-pox in this heat and dirt!"

"What smells!" she complained as Drake gave her his hand to steady her for the landing. "Graham was right. I don't believe it's safe at all." Her expression of disgust was so patent, that when she finally stepped from the boat a fat loafer tossed a mass of the loathsome mud upon her dress and dodged away grinning. A wave of furious chatter rose around them, and the looks that greeted them were dark and unpleasant.

"Don't seem to love us as they did," Drake commented as he helped to wipe the stained skirt. "Come ahead to the shops. See me talk Chinese!"

But the smells and the mud on her gown and the absence of "Graham" had upset Mrs. West. She seconded the Russian with querulous insistence, and at the first bazaar turned and led the way back to the boat. The newcomers had not been ashore ten minutes, but Srocovitch looked anxiously in the direction of the yacht. He did not know whether or not Rhoades had evaded the spy, and he feared his sudden reappearance.

"It is told to be unwholesome in the late of the afternoon and evening here," he said to the doctor. "I think Mrs. West is wise. It is a place good for malaria and the fever." The doctor talked no language but his own, and the Russian felt his way cautiously in English.

"Perhaps it would be better not to make a long stay on shore, then. Are you sure this trip you are planning is worth while?" The doctor spoke with excellent good will, but his words displeased the Russian.

"Certainly," he answered shortly. "Of the interior—and the hills—there comes no harm."

"Is Paul asleep?" asked Mrs. West, after she was stowed to her satisfaction upon the seat. "He's never once offered to help me. Paul, do you hear? I shall never again call you the politest man I know."

The Russian roused himself from a frowning study and smiled.

"I was thinking," he said. "I would not wish, without need, to alarm, but at night this place is most bad for health. And there are many insects that impart the fever of the swamp. Up the river, one tells me, it is better. Would it not be a good plan," he went on in French, speaking to Willis, "to get up a little steam and run a few miles out of this? It's safer."

"Good idea!" Drake nodded.

"You are always thoughtful." Frederica looked at him pleasantly. "And I know you have a headache, Willis. Mr. Srocovitch isn't well; we shouldn't have let him stay out in this sun!"

Drake looked across with quick concern.

"That so? Anything wrong, old man?"

The Russian flushed uncomfortably under their ready sympathy. For an instant he saw them both—his friend and the girl whose beauty was sacred in his eyes—lying as the dead lie after the I-Ho-Chu'an have finished with them. A hot stab of feeling made him pause before he answered.

Mrs. West was not interested in others' headaches; she was absorbed in urging Willis and the doctor to hasten the moving of the yacht. Later, as they floated away from Ku'an-lino, she attacked Srocovitch with a question.

"Why do we go farther on, instead of down the stream?"

"To see something new—and it is healthier," he replied; but in reality it was only here that he felt any safety from the pursuit of the man who might frustrate all his arrangements.

The pursuit of the man's words he could

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not prevent. The scene on the bank had given them emphasis. But why should the spy deceive him? What had he to gain by the deception? Much to lose if the trip were abandoned—but then everything, his whole occupation, to lose if his word were disproved. Unless all the witnesses were dead.

As Paul dressed for dinner the very luxury of his cabin reproached him. But why? What was he doing that should give him shame? It had seemed simple enough when he started. Could he have changed his whole point of view in two months? Of course if there were really danger— Nonsense. The man was an English spy. Then why not ask Frederica if she knew Nicholas Rhoades? Suddenly he remembered the man she had mentioned in the morning. Could it be he? A quick recollection of her flush set his teeth. But why should it be this man, and why shouldn't the flush mean an unpleasant memory as well as a happy one? For what was he wavering? Was he thinking he could betray his word, forget his country, because an unknown man— "Sacrifice your hosts." The words bit through all argument. Had he put himself where either decision was betrayal?

As he came out upon the deck after dinner he sought Frederica. If he could have been sure of her love, sure that his honor would be as her own, if he had not been baffled with every attempt to get nearer to things personal, he could have laid the struggle before her, it irked him so. He had learned new things on this voyage. He had forgotten the old savage sense of pursuit, and the shallower juggling with emotions. What he felt for Frederica was without the pale of his traditions.

He walked the deck late, smoking steadily, long after the swampy odors and the insects had driven the others below. Before his walk was ended his decision was made.

"I've begun, and I'll go on," he said, and the shore looked back at him dank and distorted in the mist, as he struck his open palm into a close grasp upon the rail.

IV.

Rhoades rolled himself forward until he sat up. His knees were trussed down with firm and intricate knots upon a stick passed beneath them, and his arms, held under the protruding ends, were tied by the wrist a little way above his ankles. From ankle to knee his legs were bound in a solid bandage that defied pulling. He could make no impression on any of his bonds. After his first struggles he rested a moment and thought, his head bowed forward.

It was getting late. He guessed at the time he had given the Russian to forestall his story, and could have groaned. He was sinking deeper and deeper in the oozing mud. He wondered if one night would bury him in its corruption.

The morass seemed to move under him like a nest of live things, squirming as he bent farther and tried to shake his watch from his pocket. It remained fast, but his movement pressed another hard object against his side. His match safe! He doubled still more closely, throwing himself upon his side again, and working with concentrated purpose in his writhings, till the silver holder tumbled into the ooze.

His fingers were free. The thongs were bound no lower than the wrist. In his haste to seize the safe before it was swallowed by the mire, he flung himself upon his face, and felt the ill-smelling scum against his lips. But he had the box. With a tremendous effort he righted himself. Carefully touching the spring, he inspected the contents. The box was full and the matches were dry.

He extracted one, and attempted to light it. It ignited, but, held in his fingers, came just short of reaching the cord about his wrists. He dropped it backward, catching it against his bonds. It went out. He lighted another, and this time succeeded in laying it, still burning, across the viciously drawn fetters. The flame crept slowly toward the rope.

The pain of the travelling fire, with the corroding ache of the phosphorus that had dropped under his sleeve, brought the blood to his face. The fuzz on the outer surface of the rope caught in a little spurt and went out. Again and again he tried. Finally the flame ate into the substance of the cord, and the hemp gave fibre by fibre; but the fire travelled always lengthwise instead of across, and made deep burns before the outer band was half destroyed. The last match was exhausted. Wrenching and pulling with his blistered hands, he loosened his manacles. Five minutes later he stood, and moving his cramped limbs cautiously, tried

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to look out from the tangle of the grass. He had removed the gag and wiped his smeared mouth.

He made his way in the direction of the inlet and then along its shore, sinking in the spongy tufts of the sedges, and plunged often above the knee in the yellow water. The river swirled in around the roots of the grasses, and sucked back in deepening eddies. He was near the mouth. When he came to a place beyond which wading was impossible, he turned back and began to explore the marsh. The grasses were tall enough to hide him completely. Near the place where he had been thrown a path had been broken through the lush growth, and he followed it, watching lest he stumble upon more enemies in this grewsome seclusion.

The path brought him to another inlet and to a boat. A few bulbs in a crust of dirt and slime were thrown into the bottom. Those above were moist, as if uprooted but the moment before. Oars rested in the rowlocks. One he seized, stepping into the bow and pushing savagely at the mudbank.

As he pulled out into midstream he kept time with the leisurely motions of the Chinese boatmen, bending closely to his work. But his glance had flown instantly to the anchorage of the "Koloa." The yacht was gone.

As he moved down stream, his motions deliberate, his face impassive, he canvassed the possibilities. Once beyond the village, his assurance rose with the vigor of his strokes. The yacht must be before him, he reasoned. The river was practically impassable above, often silted up, and always a dangerous swamp. If the Russian knew the Ama-Songa, he would go down stream. Down stream, too, lay the only other hope. That the words of his would-be assassins were well founded he had not a doubt. The mob would be upon Ku'an-lino in the morning. For three hours of good daylight and another of the long twilight he sent the boat ahead with splendid impetus. Once during the time he stopped and examined his pistol.

Two villages were already left behind. The sunset and the lingering afterglow fell upon a landscape lovely enough to give him pause, but he rowed the faster for the sight. Black darkness overtook him feeling his way among a group of islands deceptive as a labyrinth. On one he grounded, but with a sudden shifting of his weight, and a strong thrust, got himself clear.

He kept a keen lookout for the yacht. Perhaps she was already safe. Then again he remembered the talk of the men who had thrown him into the swamp—and dared not believe. Soon he would know. They would certainly anchor; no boat of the size of the "Koloa" could risk the Ama-Songa at night, pilot or no pilot.

The pain of his burned wrists he had not felt in the ardor of his search, but the swarms of insects that followed him were more deadly. Their stings left him no respite. Even when the moon rose he could only peer forth at his course between swelled lids, and through a cloud of encompassing torments. The blood trickled into his eyes, and even as it ran, they stung again and blinded him, singing in his ears with a noise maddening and monotonous, like the humming of angry bees.

At last he looked at his watch. Ten o'clock! He began to despair of the yacht, and grasping his oars in a fever of energy, he sent the boat along the swiftest part of the current toward the only chance of rescue. He passed another village set back beyond the marsh, and not even a light showed that there was life beneath its curved roofs. The nauseating smell of the wild lilies filled his nostrils. The pain of the poisoned bites mingled itself with the aching of his muscles, and the persecuting drone of the insects took on a rhythm from the strenuous beating of his heart.

He had studied the river and the shores with the minutest care before the arrival of the yacht, and he knew that three-fifths of his journey would be over when he came abreast of Kwan-ho. Like Ku'an-lino, it clung close to the bank. Wiping the blood and perspiration from his eyes, several times he looked along the right shore for signs of the hillock that lifted it clear of the swamp.

At the instant that it came in sight a sickening din broke upon the air, and flames creeping along the eaves showed the frail houses emptying themselves of their terrified inhabitants. Rhoades recalled with a quick sense of horror that in Kwan-ho lived a little group of Christians. The screams of the women and children, the yells of the mob, and the banging of the gongs rose distinct and separate.

He was already abreast of the village. Poor wretches, wading out to escape the

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PEN RHYN STANLAWS.

FREDERICA DRAKE.

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knives and bludgeons of the rabble, were being slaughtered in the shallow water. A ghastly figure swam toward the boat, the face dabbled with dark splotches, and, as he saw it, the lips shrieked and the face disappeared. The shrieking lips, the horrors near the bank, gave back his failing force. It was from this he was trying to save the yacht—to save Frederica.

He was already beyond the village, hugging the opposite shore as nearly as he dared, when a breeze sprang up. The burning houses burst into a blaze, and the glare brought out the figure in the boat with the sharpness of a silhouette. The mob, yelling red-handed on the bank, perceived it. With a rush and a howl of delight they found one of the boats of the village, and a dozen, climbing over its low sides, waved their arms in shrieking derision and made lustily after.

Those that rowed had the strength of devils. For a quarter of a mile they drew rapidly nearer. All at once Rhoades rested his oars, drew his pistol, and fired. One of the dancing fiends in the prow fell backward, but the pause was short. Screaming with rage, they came on with swifter strokes. They were gaining appallingly. Rhoades fired again. A figure toppled into the water, and the boat tilted heavily. The fallen man had seized it by the gunwale. A knife came down and the hand loosed its hold, but there had been a full minute's delay. Rhoades's arms were giving out. The boats had covered three-quarters of a mile in the race, but if he had not been well in advance at the beginning he would have long since been overtaken. One of his pursuers fired an old matchlock, but the aim was poor and he remained unhurt. Then a missile grazed his head.

He looked back once more. They were creeping up. He was close upon a small promontory that jutted out a few yards into the water. There was a bit of scrubby bush among the rank grass that covered it. As he passed it he fired twice. There was panic in the other boat; for a moment even the rowing ceased. Standing up the instant he was concealed, he leaped into the mud, giving the boat a backward push with his foot as he jumped. Clutching the grass and the wiry scrub, he pulled his feet out of the sucking nastiness upon drier ground.

The current caught his boat and drew it down the stream. From his concealment he heard the plash of oars, and the yells sounded close in his ears as the others reappeared and gave chase. They had not yet suspected his escape. No native ever lands at night save at a village. Rhoades remembered that as he crouched almost under their waving arms, waiting for them to clear the projecting point of land. They evidently believed him cowering panic-stricken at the bottom of the boat. He must get away by the time they overtook it and found it empty.

Yet haste was impossible. The natives did not exaggerate the horrors of the river bank. Even on the mound where he hid, the clinging earth was already taking its dragging hold.

Feeling his way, he crept along the ridge. At the edge of the swamp he hesitated. The grass grew so high it would protect him from the enemy, but it would bury him as well. His glance followed the circle of the horizon. Beyond, where the river swerved suddenly, rose a hill. The yells were returning. The boat was close to the ridge. With his eye on the hill-top he plunged into the engulfing sedge.

He had broken a stick from the meagre bush, and with it he aided his feet in finding the firmest hummocks among the pools, and pressed on, plunging from one quagmire to another, forever fleeing and forever overtaken by the devouring slough. Often he sank so deeply that, as he went down, he felt the contest was over, but still he tore himself from the octopus grasp, only to find it yet fastened to his steps.

Water rats scuttled beneath his feet. Strange gurglings and smackings came from the nidorous depths below. Through what seemed an eternity of succeeding pitfalls he fought and wrestled his way out upon a quaking bog, and so, at last, to the firm land, and dropped upon it, a slime-covered figure, shaken with a panting struggle for breath.

The insects clung about him in triumphant swarms, but for a time he made no effort to brush them away. Then he sat up. He could not be sure of the hour, for he had lost his watch in the morass. By the moon it should be after midnight. He got upon his feet, and, once more clearing his eyes, started. He was now a half mile from the river, and the mountain loomed in the near foreground. To the right the Ama-Songa swept off upon its aimless wanderings in

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the marsh. He must conquer the height above his head and make his way straight across the country. If he were to reach the camp at Povorst by dawn he must regain, by desperate going, the time lost in the swamp.

The climbing was steep and dark beneath the trees. The underbrush made a tangle like the close defences of the jungle. His path led along the edge of sand cliffs and among loose stones of sudden slopes. More than once he rolled into a ravine and recovered his ground only by a terrific scramble. The weakness of hunger impeded his ascent, and his blood hammered in jerking throbs.

The downward track was easier. When he fell it was to be shot forward in the direction in which he wished to go, and his tumbles discouraged for an instant the pursuit of his tormentors. His last fall dropped him sheer into the valley by the crumbling of the place where he had seized a foothold for a moment's breath. The brambles saved him as he fell, but their stout thorns tore through his clothes, leaving in his flesh thin-lipped wounds that bled freely.

After this, by swamp and hillock, the country sank in undulations to its accustomed flatness, and he strove against the remaining distance, urging his failing body to ever more frantic effort as the dawn revealed him, a grisly spectacle, to the screaming birds. When the sun rose it found him, brought all at once to a stand, where a wide flood rolled its great waters between him and the point he must attain.

There were neither houses nor boats, and no human presence moved upon the broad desolation of the river. His body was numb to its wounds, and though the flies were thick upon the clotted blood above his temple, he did not know it. His whole soul, all the consciousness he had left, was set upon the business of getting forward. Quietly he slipped off his coat and stiffened shoes, his face ghastly in its mask of blood and grime, and stopping only to cool his mouth in the turbid waves, started on the last stretch of his journey.

It was five o'clock when the sentry challenged a dripping figure that demanded on the instant an interview with the colonel; it was thirty minutes later when, the determined protest finally overborne, Rhoades entered the tent of the commanding officer.

Colonel Troatska was ill-pleased. He was sleepy, and he missed the dignity of his uniform. The camp at Povorst was temporary, and the colonel's quarters were even plainer than those of his fellows elsewhere. But they were clean. The form that had thrust itself into this sacredly guarded spot brought with it the vile smell of the rotting marsh. Its hair was a mat, and reddened streams still trickled over the swollen forehead and neck. The eyes were almost closed with the venom of the bites, and the whole face plastered with mire and streaked with blood. The burned wrists and blistered hands, the half-clad feet, the whole soaking picture appealed to him as repulsive and suspicious.

He did not notice the skin above the bruised elbows nor the man's bearing, curiously incongruous with the rest, and surprise appeared upon his face as Rhoades began to speak. His suspicion was augmented. His first sleepy conviction was stronger than the swift and cogent eloquence of the story. He heard it with impatience; neither the horrors past nor to come moved him.

He could do nothing without approval from higher authority. If a few foolhardy Americans chose to run their necks into a noose, he was desolated, but he could not exceed his orders, to get them out. Of course he would write the narrative to the proper personages, and meantime he would prefer to finish his sleep.

It was obvious that he distrusted the story, and greatly feared jeopardizing the plan Srocovitch had in hand.

Rhoades held himself rigidly silent till the officer had finished.

"You forget, perhaps"—the words could not be heard beyond the colonel's own ears, but they were plain and impressive—"that the death of Count Tverdivorsk will not be pleasing to Russia. It will be laid at your door."

The assurance of the words, the strength of the man's personality, despite the terrible exhaustion—that could hardly be simulated—brought a second's wavering to the officer's look. He listened thoughtfully as Rhoades went over the main points of his tale. The story was clear and precise, charged with a force that might have moved the mountain of Ku'an-lino. Before it ended the colonel's gaze hardened.

"No," he said finally. "I can do nothing, and for the present you stay here."

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V.

The road grew cleaner as it left the village. Hemp and wheat fields took the place of rice.

It was already ten o'clock, and the sun had begun to burn hardily.

The whole party were walking. Captain Hawkes stalked solemnly by Frederica; he was ill at ease about the yacht.

"Everything depends upon the boat in this back-of-nowhere sort of country," he had insisted the day before. "Suppose——"

"Oh, suppose it blows up while we're gone, you're life will be saved! I tell you, Captain, we want you," Drake interrupted. "Paul says you must go. It's a jolly trip."

Captain Hawkes waited till Drake turned away.

"Paul be damned!" he said to the flagstaff.

But he had yielded to Frederica.

The wind caught the fields in a blur of waving lights, and tempered the glare. It was pleasant to feel the firm earth beneath your feet and see the birds dipping and soaring above the grain.

The spy was about to leave them. Stopping, he pointed, and nodded his head toward the mountain. His words, however, had nothing to do with the shrine. The Chinese guide, who stood listening at a little distance, was one of the men who had thrown Rhoades into the swamp.

Suddenly there came out upon the highway a figure, dreadful, gasping as it came. When the Chinaman appeared in its path it threw up its hands in terror, a terror so dreadful it sent the blood back to Frederica's heart.

The fleeing creature caught the look in the girl's eyes. He prostrated himself, clinging to her dress and babbling in shrill, broken words. His left ear had been torn from his head.

The spy had changed color.

"Get them to go on," he said quickly. "It's an escaped criminal."

"How do you know what he is? What is he saying?" Paul's question was sharp.

The spy interpreted rapidly in Russian. The guide's narrow eyes turned from him to his questioner, and an expression half-amused, half-admiring, broke for a second the heavy stolidity of his face. Srocovitch observed the look as he listened to the spy's version, and translated it to the others.

The doctor had gotten a little case from the baggage, and was bending over the trembling creature, whose head was buried in his arm, the horrid mutilation uppermost. The physician worked gently, speaking in a quiet murmur of encouragement as he tried to cleanse and bandage the wound.

"Thank God you are here." Frederica's lips trembled.

The doctor, absorbed, did not notice the words, but Paul both heard and saw, and saw, too, that upon the man's collar was a little silver cross. Whether he had forgotten it or it was the courage of the martyr that had kept it there, he still wore it, and the sun glinted on it as the doctor worked.

The spy's story, the story of a village feud, seemed to Srocovitch strangely improbable for this part of the country. He knew the frontier provinces better than the spy was aware.

"He says 'wife' and 'children.' I can make out so much of his talk," volunteered the captain.

Paul turned to the spy.

"What does he say about his wife and children?" he asked.

"Nothing about either," was the answer. The spy spoke no English, and had not understood the captain.

Paul repeated the reply.

"He certainly did—use those words." The captain shook his head with emphasis. "I had a couple of these men on the 'Walla-Walla,' and I got on to some of their lingo—and I know those two words."

Paul's gaze was fixed upon the spy, who was talking volubly.

"The sooner you can get the party along the better," he was saying. "There are no villages between here and the shrine. These family quarrels don't spread. But if you stay here you may see more——"

"More criminals?"

The spy paused. "He may be a criminal," he said doggedly. "Mutilation is one of their ways of punishing."

"What shall we do with the poor chap?" asked Drake. "Whatever's happened, he's suffered enough."

"Yes; he's suffered enough," Srocovitch answered as if thinking. His eyebrows were drawn down. He had fastened on the spy the look with which he had listened to Rhoades. He doubted the man's translation. "Lied with an object!" The warning came back as he watched the spy's face, and saw the

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understanding that existed between him and the brutal-faced fellow he had selected for their guide.

"You'd better hurry them on." The spy turned to his superior restlessly. His manner showed an agitation that increased with the delay. "You must get these people away from the yacht. It's late now." He had lost his servility.

Paul hesitated. To turn back meant failure—disgrace—perhaps the suspicion of treachery.

The spy saw the hesitation, saw that the moment was weighty. He opened his mouth to speak, but Paul was listening to the cry of the wretch who had interrupted the doctor in a new frenzy of appeal.

A faint sound like the murmuring of locusts could be heard far off across the fields.

"The Tsai Hwui! The Tsai Hwui! They are coming!"

The Chinese guide broke in upon the cry with a harsh interjection that sounded like a threat. The man shrieked, covering his remaining ear with his hand and cowering lower. He became suddenly dumb; his body shook with a quivering fright.

"What—" began Paul.

"He screamed because the doctor hurt him; the guide bade him not to be a coward." The spy anticipated the question glibly, but even as he spoke he saw that his lie was detected.

Paul had understood the name, the name of the parent society of the I-Ho-Chu'an. Had it come to life again to perpetrate new crimes under the protecting shadow of a worse monster? The yacht had had little news for a month. But there was a missionary letter he had thought an old wife's tale of fear.

The spy guessed at his suspicion.

"There's no danger at Ku'an-lino," he cried. "You must go on. It is impossible to turn back now. This is a mere local disturbance—only a few Christians——"

"We are Christians, and foreigners besides!"

The spy did not pause.

"And if your Excellency fears for himself, I can give you a sign, a word—the Society—all—respect it. Only you must swear by——"

"That's enough!"

The man shrank as if his mouth had been closed by a blow; save for the expression of his eyes, the tragic figure of the fleeing Chinaman was the only inharmonious note in a landscape joyous and peaceful.

The hesitation was gone from Paul's manner. Neither as Srocovitch nor as Tverdivorsk would he so risk the woman he loved, nor the friends with whom he had broken bread. Patriotism had been always his supreme passion. But patriotism did not demand that he deliver over the friends who trusted him to unspeakable deaths. Without a pause, without inward parley, he chose. Better disgrace, the overthrow of ambition, the odium of suspected treason, than such dishonor.

He spoke swiftly with Drake and the captain. To no one else did he mention the Great Sword or the Boxers.

There was a protesting outcry at the thought of returning. The guide and his master had both disappeared. Srocovitch discovered their absence with alarm. His death might mean the death of all, and to be rid of him was now the spy's only safety.

The captain was among his men, and a sealed package in charge of a sailor was quickly undone, its contents vanishing as soon as they saw the light. Drake had given the marching orders.

"West and the doctor have nothing," he said in passing. "Better find them pistols."

"Have them ready when we get to the village, but don't show them," Paul added as they secured the weapons. "Here, take the cartridges."

Mr. West received his pistol anxiously, concealing it in his pocket and crossing the road to his wife. The others were already moving toward the town, excepting Willis, who had been deftly helping the doctor. The fugitive was sunk in an Eastern apathy, and he showed such signs of terror when Drake hospitably attempted to take him along, that they loaded him hastily with coins and provisions that were, no doubt, anathema to his Oriental stomach, and left him. Frederica, looking back, saw him slip away among the wheat.

"Don't look so scared, mother. Laugh and talk when you get to the village." Laura West pulled her mother's arm through her own as they came precipitately in the wake of the others.

"I'd better go ahead and signal for the launch," Drake was saying. "Then there'll be no waiting."

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"No—keep together," Paul interposed. "See that no one straggles. And go on with the joking," he added in a lower tone.

A kind of hubbub began to make itself heard, but it seemed to be at a distance rather than immediately before them. Mrs. West was puffing. Her steps became more and more inert. Frederica had gone back to Laura, and Laura would not leave her mother, so the whole party lagged with the lagging of Mrs. West.

As they approached the entrance of the village some children came about with derisive laughs, and made insolent gestures with their grimy hands. Once in the sloppy street, progress grew harder. The crowd, at first idly curious, then distinctly unfriendly, gathered closer upon their path, and would have separated the men, but as fast as they were forced aside each pushed himself back.

The sailors had formed lines at the front and rear. Captain Hawkes took Laura's place at her mother's side, and with Mr. West lifted the elder woman forward at a pace that kept them all advancing steadily, but without the appearance of haste. As yet there was no manifestation of actual hostility, but the very numbers of the rabble were threatening.

Save for the laggard, no one had an air of concern. Drake enlivened his way by shouting gayly and waving his hands at the mob, addressing even the men he hustled aside with greetings urbane and smiling.

"Howdy, old man! Who's your tailor?" Laura heard him inquire amiably, as he sent a scantily draped figure out of her path.

His unaffected laughter at the grotesque make-up of the crowd wrought a few of the nearest to a kind of mirth, so that they gave back his good-humored utterance with a chatter of jocose reprisal as they pressed harder upon his steps.

"Don't get affectionate, gentlemen! I'll come again. 'Rah for Ku'an-lino!" he called still more cheerfully as they threatened to swamp him.

They recognized the name and mimicked his pronunciation in a cackling chorus.

"Look out, sonny! You've lost your hair ribbon!" he warned the man before him, twisting the obstructing form around in order to squirm past. For a moment he was out of sight in the jam, but he wormed his way back, to emerge, still smiling, before his sister.

"Get your valet to try Lubin," he was saying suavely as he crushed between the last two that divided him from his friends.

"It's lucky you're not understood, Willis," commented Frederica.

She was talking with Laura, naturally, without a break to show the repulsion the suffocating mob inspired. Paul and the doctor keeping close, one on either hand, emulated Drake's expression of pleasant interest, and joined in the talk of the girls in the same careless fashion, but their eyes guarded every approach.

Before they had gone half the length of the muddy street the pelting began. Drake saw the doctor seize an upraised arm, and at the same instant from the other side felt the foul slush moist upon his cheek. Whirling, he struck out with his right fist and dropped the waddling shape that had besmeared him.

"No bouquets, old boy!" he muttered at the sprawling back as he moved on.

The reeking handfuls fell oftenest upon Paul, but in the shower of filth no one escaped. From the top of an adobe house came a hail of more unyielding missiles that cut the skin where they struck. They seemed to be aimed wholly at the Russian, but they scattered, and one brought a stain through Frederica's thin sleeve. Captain Hawkes restrained his men, but they broke into a faster walk, even Mrs. West being spurred into genuine activity by the rain of mud and sticks.

Drake's shouts broke now and then through the noise. Once a man flourishing a heavy rod raised it over Paul's head. Mr. West, who was directly behind, knocked the man prostrate under the feet of the trampling host. Paul turned in time to see the man's face, the face of the guide who had deserted them.

They were in full view from the deck of the yacht when the hubbub they had heard without the village grew louder in a sort of distant rumble and ringing. The crowd heard it, too. Their attack grew bolder, and they made a sudden rush that seemed instigated by some command. The sailors were using their fists.

"Don't fire unless I do." Captain Hawkes shouted the order in the ear of the next man, who passed it quickly along. As they descended the slope to the shore one of the sailors slipped in the mire, and was down before the others could save him. As he

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was lifted there was an instant's delay, and the few feet between them and the water packed solidly with a jeering mass of angry faces.

The men on the yacht had needed no signal. The launch was already on its way shoreward, and moving faster than it had ever moved before. Inch by inch the crowd gave before the butts of the pistols, and the launch touched the shore as the party broke through the last of the besieging throng. Laura and Frederica were fairly hurled into the boat through the line of fighting men, and Mrs. West, too dazed to help herself, was at last, with desperate effort, plumped over the side.

Those in the launch were beating off the mob that waded out into the shallow water and fought upon the edges of the boat. None of the crowd had firearms, but Willis and Paul had both been struck by something that drew the blood. As they sprang to the help of the launch, the last sailor wrestled his way into the boat and Captain Hawkes, guarding the retreat to the end, fired his pistol into the faces of the gang that had their skinny grasp upon his clothing. He was not fairly aboard when the others poured their shots with powerful effect into the swarming mass hanging to the gunwale. There was a startled yell and a moment's diversion, so that they were clear of the bank before the recovery. But the crowd was only hindered, not driven off. The rabble on the shore increased and pressed upon the foremost, who waded or swam beside the launch, hacking with sharp knives whenever they could catch the sides, and threatening by very force of numbers and weight to swamp the boat.

Paul, his coat torn, his face bleeding, swept back the oncoming throng with superhuman strength. Since the stain had appeared on Frederica's arm he had not spoken. Willis, clutched by one assailant as he struck down another, would have been dragged overboard, but Paul's arm broke the grasp and sent the clutching figure crippled and shrieking into the water. The sailors of the "Koloa" had sung while the crowd pelted them with Ku'an-lino mud. They sang no longer; their faces were grim, and they gave good measure for the pelting.

The launch was well under way; the swimmers began to diminish, but a fleet of boats had put off from the bank. Before Mrs. West could be hoisted on board they were closing fast upon the yacht. As she went over the side the men followed her with a rush, and the launch was swung clear of the water just as the first of the pursuers tumbled into it. When he felt himself rising he screamed in terror, and with a bound descended upon his fellows. These sprang at the "Koloa" as if they would clamber up her smooth sides. But the boats behind were giving way under the steady fire from the deck, and those nearest, suddenly panic-stricken, joined the receding wave and sent it faster toward the shore.

In the breathing space that followed, almost without words, Paul and the captain worked together. Every man on board was assigned his station; every access to the lower part of the boat, excepting the companionway, was battened down. The women were ordered below. Mrs. West alone obeyed. The girls moved quietly from man to man, distributing ammunition for the rifles.

The steam, lowered for a two days' rest, could not be gotten up in a moment, but smoke poured from the funnel and hovered in a spiritless fashion above their heads. The air was lifeless, the water smooth and oily, save between the village and the yacht, where it began again to teem with the shoals of the oncoming populace.

The mob had been reënforced. Strange figures, stained and splashed, swaying drunkenly, appeared in the boats, an army of infuriate creatures—inhuman, revolting.

On the land the distant hubbub had become a tumult close at hand. Demoniac howling came across the water with a din deafening and horrible. A car was being drawn to the river's edge, and on it a painted idol lurched and jolted. With the rioters from Kwan-ho had come an armed body of the I-Ho-Chu'an. Beside the car they were pulling into place their wooden cannon.

Suddenly there was a rush farther up the stream. Fifty men leaped upon a raft and poled rapidly among the boats. One of them took aim at a sailor and wounded him. The small gun on the yacht, filled with powder and slugs, had been swung around and was pointed at the raft. At its roar a frightened cry came from the boats. The herd surrounding the raft stampeded, but the other villagers came on without pausing. They carried ropes and grappling hooks, and behind them, fast uniting with their

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ranks, came the blood-thirsty horde of the Boxers. The shot had done fearful destruction on the raft, but the places of the fallen had been quickly taken by the swimmers, each armed with what seemed a handled bludgeon, fastened in some manner at the waist.

The noise and the smoke, the beating of the gongs on shore, the screams of the dying, blended in a confusion through which one could barely make oneself heard.

"—— below. You must;—a straight mark in that dress! Paul said you'd gone," Willis managed to make his sister understand between his shots.

Frederica shook her head. The raft had reached the yacht. A dozen grappling hooks were caught upon the rail, in spite of the fire of the defenders. The "Koloa" was a large boat and she must be guarded in every place at once. The engineers and stokers could not be spared from below, and that left but thirty-four men, two girls, and a boy against thousands.

The shot from the cannon on shore was beginning to do some damage, but the grappling hooks had been cast off and fallen, with the living weight upon their ropes, beneath the vessel. The attempt was renewed by swarming myriads, and the harrying fire of the attacking rifles protected the climbers.

Paul was at the worst point, above the raft. He had twice been wounded by the bullets, while, so far, his friends had escaped. Still more boats were putting out from the shore. A rifle shot brought down another sailor. Paul saw that the man had fallen under cover, and himself moved so as to command the area defended by both. With a sure aim his shots picked off those handling the grappling irons, and as he fought, he shouted directions, warnings, his eyes over all that part of the yacht, his voice clear and confident, heartening the men, but bringing upon his own head the strongest fire of his foes.

The shots had become a fusillade. As he emptied his gun at a critical instant an exultant shriek made him turn his head. Three of the enemy were already on the deck; others were swarming after them.

The short iron flails they swung about their heads crashed murderously beside them, denting the stubborn teak as they were overpowered. Paul seized the weapon from the nearest of the fallen and felled a fourth, clearing the rail with a sweep of the loose piece of iron dangling by its leather thong. The men clinging to the rope below dropped as the topmost were hurled backward, and he jerked it free and hauled it in swiftly. Some of the grappling irons were crudely improvised, but not the one whose work he had annulled. It was Russian, and had been furnished by his own countrymen for the carrying out of his own scheme.

In the last moments of this struggle Willis had leaped into Paul's place. Frederica was loading for him. Once he found her at his side, and together they sent a volley into a cluster mounting upon the chains. Like burrs they fastened to every projection and, holding to one another, grew to a mass over which the latest comers climbed nimbly toward the goal. Everywhere numbers were prevailing. Even as Paul turned he saw a nightmare circle of faces, grinning with hate, appear above the rails.

From a dozen places that they had been forced to leave half guarded the hordes ascended. Each man on board, throwing off the grappling hooks or slashing the ropes in two, had fired and struck and fought as if he were ten, but the hosts of the foe were exhaustless. The worst horror of the conflict was in this multiplying, endless outpouring of human midges that swarmed out, all unguessed and horrible, from Ku'an-lino, and fell and shrieked and died, and yet came on more numerous for the slaughter.

The fight was now on deck. As the men gave back, little by little, Frederica knew that in a hand-to-hand struggle she would be useless. Paul had paused, his weapon upraised, fear showing on his face for the first time as he saw her position. Willis was shouting at her something she could not hear. Before it was half uttered she was with Laura in the entrance of the companionway. The two girls collected and loaded a rifle and two pistols lying within their reach. Frederica thrust a pistol into her dress.

"For us—if they take us."

Laura nodded.

The anchor had been raised. The propeller was beginning to revolve. The "Koloa," drifted around where the anchor had held it, had been headed up-stream. The pilot had deserted, perhaps joined the attack. Captain Hawkes was at the wheel, the pilot house guarded by a handful of his men. As the yacht backed in turning, horrid yells came through the clash of knives

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PENRHYN STANLAWS

WILLIS DRAKE.

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and the shuffling, groaning welter of battle on deck. The men who were swimming around the stern to get at the farther side of the boat, with their companions in the craft behind her, had been caught in the great blades. The propeller jerked dangerously and sent the attacking tribe upon the rail, some into the water, where a red foam churned over them from the hungry screw, some sliding in a jumble and huddle of yellow upon the deck.

Slowly, driven back into a compact half circle, the defenders had massed themselves about the companionway. The constant movement of the wrestling bodies, the shifting, turning struggle of the last extremity of a hopeless battle, gave no point whereon the sight could rest. Some of the "Koloa's" people were down; many fought after their wounds were desperate, like sick men in a fever.

Paul was directly in the centre, and the worst fury of the assault was let loose upon his single person. Bleeding from his cuts and gunshot wounds in his side, he stood his ground even after the others had fallen away behind him.

A whooping band, the smell of opium upon their fetid breath, were upon Drake, and their hands had fastened on the rifle he had clubbed. Frederica sprang from her place; pushing one pistol into her brother's grasp, she would have raised her own against the leader, but with a leap a hellish figure, its face convulsed with a malignant lust of hate, broke the cordon and struck at her with its iron sword—a blow terrific and final.

Paul had seen the girl's motion and the leap of the fanatic. As the great sword descended he plunged between, striking at the man with his fist. The other staggered but his blow came home, only it was the Russian, not the girl, upon whom its deadly weight descended.

A howl of delight rose as the Russian fell. The attack swept forward, into and over the men at the companionway. With a scream of exultation the man of the sword leaped again for Frederica, but he doubled into a heap at the girl's feet, and the arm that had felled him lifted her into safety.

It was Rhoades. In spite of the grime and blood; in spite of the disfigurement of his disguise; in spite of everything, she knew him; even his voice, hoarsened and changed, she knew. In the midst of great horror joy sprang to life within her. What he shouted she did not hear, but as he took the Russian in his arms and dragged him within the shelter she knew that they were saved.

In dazed remembrance she recalled that among the yellow mass flung towards them by the first movement of the boat had been other figures, more darkly clad, that had leaped from the rail with terrific energy, smiting and crushing the multitude to force a way to their brief sanctuary. She had had glimpses of these new figures, blotched and indistinct, as of worse destroyers close upon them, in the moment before the Russian fell.

The propeller was revolving faster. The raft and the boats were dropping behind. The crowd upon the deck fought with the frenzy of the trapped. They were still as five to one, but the men with Rhoades were the picked men of a picked regiment. Before them the shrieking throng retreated slowly till they could retreat no farther. The defenders of the yacht, cheering their rescuers, had flung themselves forward upon the breaking forces of their assailants.

The steady puffs of the engine and the whirling strength of the propeller sent them ever more swiftly down the stream. It was a ghastly wake they left behind them as they went. While they still fought, a half-naked man appeared from below, the red-hot bar with which he had sliced his fire still in his hand. To the end clung a mass of something wet, and it brought the smell of burning hair.

"Watch out, here! One of 'em got past!" he shouted, and disappeared into the prisoned depths, where the easiest part of his fighting had been the killing of a visible foe.

To the end the shrieks of "Tapi yang kuei tze! Kill! Kill!" rang above the other noises of the combat.

The yell rose, strangled and vindictive, even from the last man as he plunged over the rail and sank in the wash from the bows. Willis watched him as he struggled clear. No shot followed.

The sound of the gongs died out in the troubled air; from the poppy fields silence flowed in upon the yacht, but no one felt its healing. While the decks still bled beneath their feet, for every one on the "Koloa" the air was full of cries, and the sunlight filled with grinning faces that

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leered and moved in hate and came in awful numbers ever nearer—nearer—

The sunset met them as they turned their faces from the Russian camp, and the heart of the "Koloa" began beating towards the West.

Drake, with Rhoades and the Lieutenant, had gone ashore with the men and brought the Colonel on board. Whether it was his final argument that had reversed the decision so inexorably given, or the importunity that no denial had prevented, or what inward communion had released him with fifty men and the Colonel's own launch, Rhoades never knew. The officer seemed both relieved and anxious when they appeared. At Drake's request he took with him his own surgeon as they boarded the "Koloa." All that the doctor had done the surgeon pronounced admirable; and the two conferred long, with Rhoades as interpreter.

The dinner was grave, but the thin ice of its formal courtesy swayed above the tide of deep thanksgiving, of grief and gratitude, and the stronger consciousness of life that knows neither tribe nor nation.

Mirth there could not be. Three of the wounded lay in mortal danger, and one of them was Paul, Count Tverdivorsk of Torovorst and Sralk.

Colonel Troatska, in the panoply of his dress uniform, and Rhoades in evening clothes that some one had lent, looked at each other. As the Colonel left the yacht, he paused, and for the second time made his adieus to the man who had roused him from his morning's sleep.

"It is to you that all these owe their lives, and I, my honor," he said clearly, that none might miss the words.

Under the tan of his thin cheeks, Nicholas flushed; his hurried answer disclaimed, but he held out his hand, and met the Russian's in a grasp strong and deliberate, till the pain of his burned flesh sent the blood back from his face, and made the deck waver before his eyes.

The Lieutenant leaned upon the surgeon's arm, and his steps were taken stiffly. Among the men there went a murmur as unmistakable as cheers.

And so with stately courtesy the officers descended from the deck of the "Koloa," and the sailors who set them ashore cheered them with mighty shouts that shook the grasses of the landing-place; and Drake, standing in the stern of the tender as they moved away, felt a sudden choking as if a hand were laid upon his throat.

The boat returned, and was swung into its place; the life of the yacht began once more as it had gone for all the peaceful hours of the cruise. But to Frederica it was new, it was a dead thing made alive. She stood again by the rail where she had stood the morning of the day before, and Rhoades stood beside her.

"What could he have meant?" she was saying. "And why was it always in French, when all the rest was Russian?"

It was of Paul's wanderings she was talking. While they had waited for the doctor to finish his preparations the mutterings had become distinct. The words repeated in French were Rhoades's, "You will sacrifice your hosts to you plans," and always after it in Russian, "But my country—my promise—I cannot—" And then an interval, and Rhoades's words again, over and over in regular iteration.

"What do you suppose it meant?—it seemed to trouble him so!"

Rhoades paused a moment before he replied.

"Things often get twisted in a delirium. His mind was on the attack." Rhoades looked away to the place where the ladder had been let down. "Your brother must have come back; we are starting."

"But the words are so strange. What was it he said afterward, each time, in Russian?"

"Afterward? Oh, he was still dwelling on the danger. You see he doesn't know the end."

"If we could only ease his mind! Is there any way——"

Rhoades's face looked haggard.

"Satisfy him that you—that all are safe," he answered.

Drake called to them as he passed. Mrs. West stopped near them.

"Really, Mr. Rhoades, I feel I ought to thank you," she said. "Willis has been telling me. He had it from the colonel. It was so clever of you to think of the camp."

Frederica had shrunk farther away.

She did not speak after Mrs. West had gone. Rhoades leaned against the rail and watched her. His face was sombre with a look sadder than any it had worn during the waiting of the eight weeks past. He was going over the day.

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Could a girl do for any one she did not love what Frederica had done for the Russian? It had been his task and hers together to help the doctor. The wound was deep. The iron blade, reaching for the girl, had descended beyond Paul's head, but the heavy crosspiece of the hilt had struck. Frederica had borne her share of the doctor's work without flinching, but afterward, when the doctor had said that there was one hope in a hundred chances, the tears had overflowed her lids and fallen.

She looked so pale, so shaken, he longed to comfort her—at any cost. But he could find no words that did not seem intrusion. So he, too, was silent.

The ripples lapped softly along the boat; the girl leaned her elbows upon the rail, resting her face in her palms, her eyes on the parting water as they had been the day before. Only then she was longing for a presence that had wilfully taken itself out of her life. Now——

Rhoades spoke at last.

"I think he will pull through," he said abruptly.

She turned half toward him, dazed by his abruptness. For a moment she did not understand.

"Your friend, the count; you must not be sad."

The last twenty-four hours of sleepless struggle had left his voice not wholly under his control. When he would have had it calm, friendly, unimpassioned, it shook with a tenderness as divine as his inmost feeling.

The girl turned her face wholly to his, and as quickly turned away. In her eyes and on her lips was the glory of the sunset, though her face was in the shade. But the glory that he saw, he thought was for another, and its splendor hurt him so that for the first time he knew what pain could be.

She was no longer leaning, but stood, gazing straight into the light.

"I was not thinking of him," she said.

He saw her hand, lying upon the rail, tighten its clasp. He laid his own scarred fingers over it swiftly, drawing nearer that he might look into her face.

"Of whom then—of whom, Frederica—tell me."

She did not answer. Her weakness shamed her, but for an instant speech was gone from her.

"Ah, tell me, dear; tell me quickly, and I will go and never trouble you again." His voice had lost the hope that had lived in its first demand. But it held the long sorrow of silence, the silence of a man who does not know his own exceeding worth.

It cut the fetters of her speech.

She raised the hand that lay upon her own, and set her lips upon the scars. Her voice, weighted with all she could not say, broke fiercely as he bent his head to hear.

"Of you—of you," she cried out softly. "You and only you through all these months and days."

The breeze out of the west brought to them the fragrance of the valley lilies, faint and pure and pungent; before them the sunset burned away into the afterglow, and yet their sight was holden from its going till in the friendly night the "Koloa" dropped her anchor beneath the restful stars.

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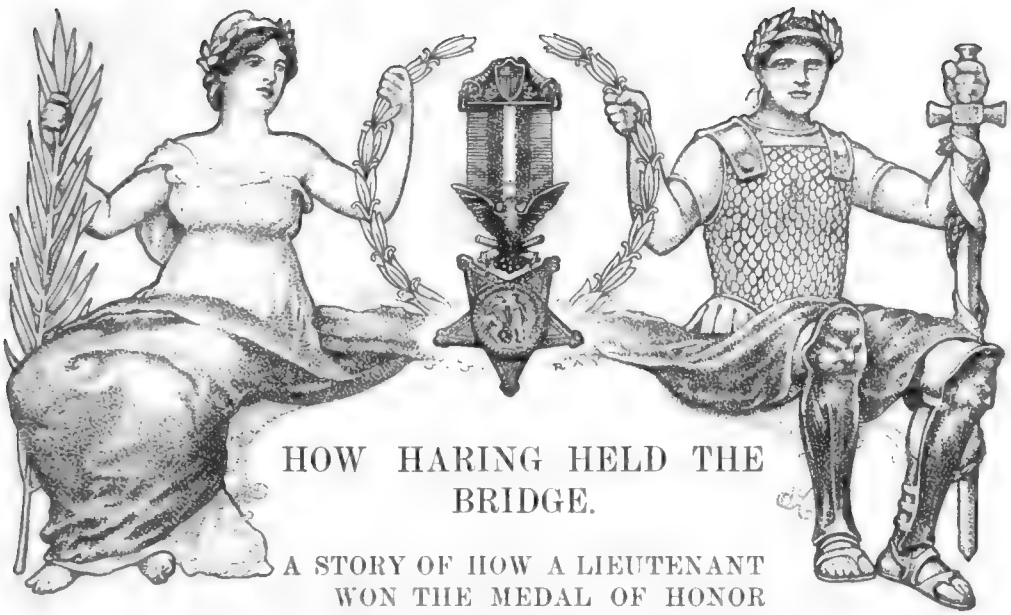

HOW HARING HELD THE BRIDGE.

A STORY OF HOW A LIEUTENANT WON THE MEDAL OF HONOR WITH THIRTEEN MEN AGAINST AN ARMY

By Carl Hovey.

[In the December number of Everybody's appeared the first of a series of stories telling of heroic deeds for which the Congressional Medal of Honor has been awarded. This is another tale of the winning of one of these medals.]

Darkness, which was rendered absolutely black by sheets of fine rain, drew down upon the little squad of outposts who were doing something to a bridge. A steady wind, moving through the pine-woods, combined with the blurring noise of the rain to muffle all the ordinary sounds of night. A young lieutenant of volunteers, his figure made formidable by the bulky folds and cape of his army overcoat, and his face almost concealed between the upturned collar and the brim of his hat, stood overlooking the work; he gave directions once in a while in a few words, or pointed out with a jerk of the arm the next task. The instinctive feeling that to-night the enemy must surely be in motion out there, and perhaps close by him, in the windy darkness, oppressed him with an anxious sense of responsibility which he tried not to show to the men.

A wide road crossed the bridge and reached back through the deserted country to where, nine miles off, in the North Carolina town of New Berne, the main body of the Union troops was garrisoned. Along this road from the opposite side of the bridge the men knew that the enemy would come. Indeed, from the young lieutenant down to the youngest country boy in his little command—the one who had helped build a bridge once in a Northern gully after a freshet had passed and who knew, consequently, just how this one could most easily be torn apart—all understood their situation perfectly. They were out there because it was their turn to lose sleep and get the rheumatism, and their comrades' turn to lie warm in camp; they must, when the enemy appeared, raise a terrible noise and then run for their lives into the woods. Thus, their own regiment, encamped about half-way back towards the town, would have a chance to get under arms and hold the attacking column in check

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until the garrison itself had finished breakfast and was prepared to fight. All understood the part they were to play in this game of war, but they did not think about it much just then. Their pressing business was with the rough, slippery timbers of the bridge which they were prying up from the string pieces. The warm sweat crept into their eyes and blinded them; their backs ached with the straining and wrenching; the wet beams on which they had sometimes to stand glided treacherously under foot.

"Easy now."

"Pull, pull, ye sons o' gun."

"There she comes."

So the men would take up each board that had been knocked loose, and would carry it to the end of the bridge. There they stood it up on end and rammed it down between the last two cross-beams. When they had pulled up about half the planking, and had placed it thus, a kind of bulwark was afforded. On either side of the road short lines of earthworks branched off along the banks of the stream. The board-breastwork filled in the gap and made the line of defences complete without a break.

The young officer was satisfied. He ranged his men—there were eleven in all, besides a sergeant and a corporal—behind the board shelter. All waited and rested, chatting among themselves—grumbling continually at their discomfort, but always in the manner of joking, for each pretended before the others that he did not really care. The rain fell persistently, sometimes slackening to a mild drizzle and again increasing to a sweeping downpour. Its incessant noise was blended with the undertone of the wind among the trees. The officer surveyed his little force as a general might look upon his army; it was his command. He was inexperienced, and felt the need of giving a good account of himself once for all, although he did not know exactly what was best to do. If no attack should be made that night, why then they would build up a fire and boil some coffee and get warm. If, on the other hand, there came a sudden rush by the enemy, it would be only too easy to fire a volley and get out of the way. Too easy, was the thought which rose emphatically in his mind. It would certainly be better to stick and hold them all back. But that was foolishness. The creek, although it was too deep to be forded here, could yet be crossed above or below his position, and in ten minutes his command would be ridiculously captured.

The lieutenant began a restless promenade. After a time he looked at his watch. It was approaching ten o'clock. He thought of the long hours that must pass before daylight. An instant later the sharp report of a musket sounded from the distance across the stream.

The men started up, holding their guns tightly. They knew the shot had been fired by one of the outside pickets. As they hung motionless, listening and staring, a second musket was discharged; this time it was nearer.

"They're comin'," said a soldier.

"Comin', sure," said the man next to him.

"Silence!" ordered the lieutenant. "Don't fire until you get the command."

Several minutes passed, during which the dull background of noise made by the storm was unbroken. The time of waiting passed with the deliberateness of sand slipping away in an hour-glass. The lieutenant standing among the men felt a choking sensation. He had never yet held a position of command under fire of the enemy. A mysterious excitement, combined with a feeling of the absolute necessity of remaining perfectly quiet, held him in a trance, from which at last he was recalled to the life of instinct by a familiar rumbling sound. This grew more and more distinct; it was sharpened by the rattle of tin-cups against bayonets, and then was heard the noise of men talking. The approaching force was swinging along rapidly and carelessly. The lieutenant waited until the shadows of the men in the front rank shaped themselves out of the darkness, and their feet trampled loudly on the bridge. Then he shouted, "Halt!"

The answer came straight back. "Charge!"

"Number one to number five," ordered the lieutenant. "Ready! Aim! Fire!"

The Confederates, as they poured on to the bridge, received the volley full in their faces. The foremost at the same instant crowded heavily into the ragged open-work of string pieces where the planking had been taken up.

"Number six to number eleven—fire!" came a second order.

The entangled mass of Confederates was hardly twenty feet away from the muzzles of the guns. They gave way before the blast, and fell back, then rushed forward

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"THE LIEUTENANT ORDERED THEM TO FIRE AT THE PIECE OF ARTILLERY EVERY TIME THE FLASH APPEARED."

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and were met by a killing fire as before, at which they huddled back, stumbling against each other, swearing, shouting hoarsely for artillery.

The cry was taken up. "We want artillery; bring it up. Bring up your artillery."

The bridge was deserted. On the south-side of the road a gun was run up. A spurt of flame sprang into the darkness, and the Union men felt the whir of a shell directly over their heads. The lieutenant ordered them out of the barricade and behind the earthworks. His blood had suddenly risen to the height of his opportunity, for he felt that this indeed was his opportunity. But his head had also become perfectly cool. He distributed his little band at long intervals, to make the formidable appearance of a line behind the earthworks.

"We've got to stay here and die, until the regiment knows that we are fighting," was the substance of a little speech which the lieutenant made to each of his men. His responsibility did not seem overwhelming when he had shared it with them all. He believed that they approved of the course that he had chosen.

A shell whistled over their heads.

"Little high," said the corporal.

The man near him opened his mouth to speak, but he caught his breath and stopped with his mouth open wide. The shell had struck a tall pine behind him. The tree was split midway up the trunk, and toppled with a horrid creaking. They watched it furtively as it fell.

"The Johnnies are chopping firewood for us," commented the corporal.

His neighbor answered seriously: "It's going to get pretty hot here."

The lieutenant ordered them to fire at the piece of artillery every time the flash appeared. He kept moving from one end to the other of his attenuated line of defence. Ever present in his mind was the dread of an attack from the rear. As the minutes passed he realized that the enemy must be doing something to clear the way. The trampling, cries, and confusion which—as the main body of troops became jammed up against the vanguard in the road—had followed the repulse of the charge, had long since given place to the silence of order and formation. The column had been halted; sharp orders, consequently, must have been rushed to the front to capture the Yankees at once or shell them out of their holes. A close watch in the rear was thus absolutely necessary, but the lieutenant did not dare despatch a man on such a service. He decided to go himself, secretly. Each end of his line would think he was engaged somewhere at the other. So he walked off into the darkness and cautiously explored the road and the woods that closed it in on both sides. To be cut off here and captured would be a wretched ending of his work. Falling boughs clipped by the shells which whistled overhead were objects to be dreaded, too, but nothing counted against the satisfaction it gave him to find that he and his men were still alone over here. Full of a boyish hope he made his way back to the line.

Nearly an hour passed. Although the Confederate artillery thundered at regular intervals, tirelessly, the shells still fell among the trees. Only one of his soldiers had been wounded. The officer felt a strong surprise that his little command was still strictly holding its ground, but after a time this realization of success did not elate him, but began to weigh him down with a sense of new responsibility. He had hoped to hold the enemy in check long enough to warn the regiment in its camp four miles away, but now, when he found himself standing secure in his position at the end of an hour, it came over him that it was his duty to keep up the fight by hook or crook until assistance came. If he could stop the attacking force at the bridge for so long a time as this, by redoubling his exertions, he reasoned, he could at least delay it there until daylight. He took a second trying walk in the darkness of the dripping pine-woods.

When he returned he found that the ammunition was getting low. He ordered the men to cease firing for a time, at least. Then he started a jocular conversation with the enemy. His voice sounded strangely loud as he called out:

"Why didn't you come along down yesterday?" It was a Monday morning. "Why did you-uns keep Sunday outside the lines?"

There was no answer. He went on agreeably: "Well, you'd oughter come right straight along an' had your camp-meetin' with us fellers."

No answer.

"Say, but there's no hard feeling. If you'll wait till morning we'll give you some coffee."

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The Confederate cannon continued to speak heavily, but there came no other answer to these proposals than a spiteful burst of musketry.

The lieutenant chuckled. For a moment he felt absolute master of the situation. It was such a great joke for a force of a dozen Yankees to hold a whole army of rebels still in their tracks—as if, he thought, a rat had stopped a saw-mill. But the next moment, as he looked at some of his men, the thought struck him that they were not at all of his frame of mind. He sauntered along the line, spoke to them, and watched them. He saw that they were becoming very uneasy. They could no longer keep still in their positions, but jumped up and sat down and jumped up again. There was no joking among them, but senseless questioning instead. They could not credit their own astonishing success. Soldier sought comfort and explanation from soldier in a manner which showed that each had privately decided there was no hope.

"What d'ye think?" one would say.

"Gettin' precious hot here," said another.

"By God, boys, I look for those fellows to come up on our rear," was the cheerless offering of a third.

Sometimes the shells, striking the trees, burst on the ground near-by with a great discharge of clinging, sickly, yellow smoke, and tore shapeless rents in the earth, deep enough to bury a horse and a man.

The lieutenant felt the danger of leaving the earthworks for further explorations down the road. The rear attack must take care of itself, he thought; and as, in his ever-alternating moods, despondency succeeded upon high hope, he added that the rear attack would take care of them all handily enough.

He wondered deeply why that project had not apparently occurred to the enemy. Were they waiting for daylight, careless of the loss of time? Then they must be an overwhelming force, confident of an easy victory over the defenders of New Berne, he reasoned. And where was the regiment all the long time—his own regiment?

The lieutenant permitted the men to fire occasionally at a flash of a gun across the stream.

Support from the regiment did come at last. Three companies were hurried in to fill the great gaps in the make-believe line behind the works. The lieutenant and his little band were now merged into a great array of soldiers, and their work was peculiar no longer. Their task, indeed, was done when the reënforcements reached them. How well done, this sentence taken from the records of the War Department shows:

"Had not Lieutenant Haring held the bridge at Bachelor's Creek for over an hour, New Berne would have been captured."

Lieut. Abram P. Haring (for that is the name of the man who was a young officer in '64, and his regiment, the One Hundred and Thirty-second New York) held the bridge for a considerably longer time, as a matter of fact. And in the Confederate army which he blockaded in the road that black February night were above 10,000 of Pickett's veteran soldiers.

Their over-confidence and Haring's courage, between the two, wrecked the whole expedition.

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VOX POVERTY.

BY WILLIAM J. LAMPTON.

Behold me,
Oh ye
Who hunger after gold,
Or to be the mould
Of fashion;
Who have a passion
To own all
They can of this big, round ball,
Called Earth;
Ye, to whom the dearth
Of anything is gall
And wormwood; say,
Get onto me,
I'm Poverty;
And I am gay
While you are glum;
By gum,
My money doesn't bother me,
And my brain isn't sore in the exercise
Of chasing around to find a prize
Of investment paying ten per cent.
On stocks or bonds or houses to rent;
And I'm not ugly and sour and blue
Because I have got a million or two
That doesn't bring in a revenue
As large as I think it ought; and I
Ain't frightened to death for fear I may die
And lose what I've got.
Oh no, I am not
That kind at all.
And I don't scare at a fire alarm,
For I've got nothing that fire will harm;
And panics don't bother;
And mobs don't curse
At the size of my purse;
I don't get drowned
From the deck of a yacht,
And cranks ain't after me
For what I have got;
And a horse doesn't fall
And break my neck,
And nobody forges my name to a check.
I don't over-eat
Enough to kill,
And kick like a steer
At a doctor's bill;
And I don't wear my nerves
To a frazzle
Trying to shine in the social dazzle,
With an income less
By a thousand or so
Than the outgo is
To maintain the show.
The trusts
May bust
And the Octopus may
Be peremptorily and permanently chased away.
But it's nothing to me,
For I have a kind of security
That nothing can shake,
And I'll be on deck
If the whole darned shooting-match
Goes to wreck.
Oh, I've got a snap,
And my peace of mind
Is as much to me
As the other kind
Get out of their money;
And why should I care
About rents and rates?
They don't charge admission
At the Pearly Gates.

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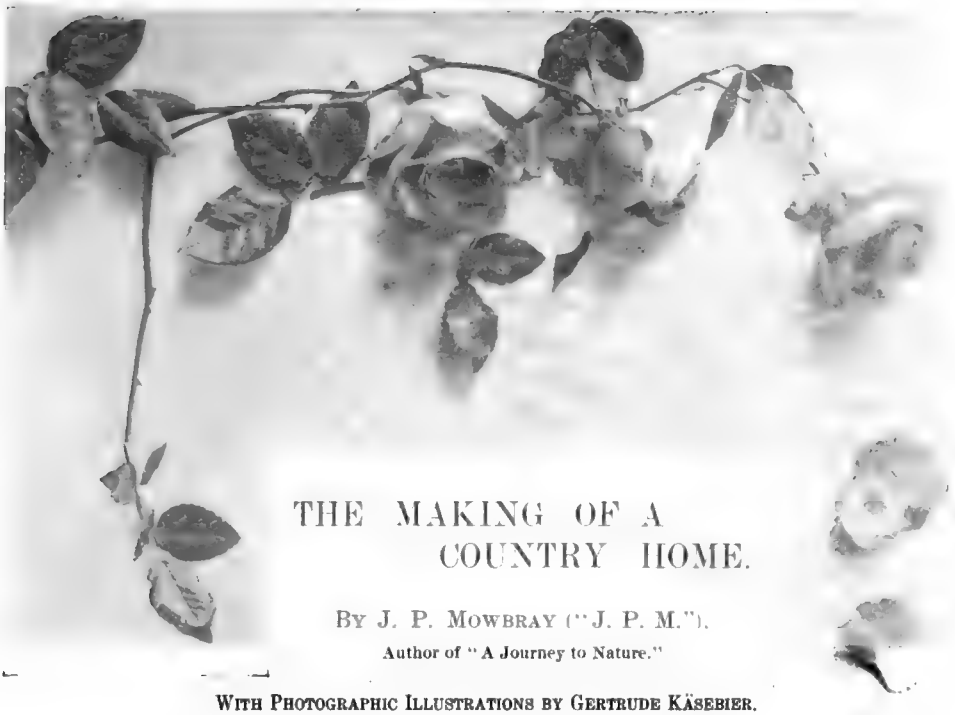

THE MAKING OF A COUNTRY HOME.

By J. P. Mowbray ("J. P. M."),
Author of "A Journey to Nature."

With Photographic Illustrations by Gertrude Käsebier.

CHAPTER II.—The Search.

JOHN DENNISON and his wife were ordinary human beings like the most of us. Neither of them had the remotest idea of doing the heroic or the romantic thing according to the current examples. But we must not forget that the great bulk of the heroism of life lies among the uncelebrated persons who do their duty unflinchingly and never know how heroic they are.

A very practical and a very common ambition had taken possession of John. It had been months growing. It was to possess a home of his own that would return him something for all his labor on it, both in the shape of physical benefit and mental satisfaction. He and his wife had come to understand each other, and they had accomplished the first, and probably the most difficult, step towards it. They had by dint of self-sacrifice and some humiliation of a very natural pride, saved up the money that was necessary for a start. It had been a long and often a wearisome struggle. But it had been lit by a new companionship and common purpose, and made endurable by a new hope. The next step promised to be more springy. It was to begin the search for a spot somewhere on earth that they could make their own and join hands still closer in the beautifying and preservation of it.

The effort that looked so pleasant in the prospect proved to be beset with disappointments, aggravations, and discouragements before they came in sight of the final results. And you must understand that, however much in common a man and woman may have in life; however close they grow together in affection and in purpose, one remains masculine and the other feminine to the last. Try as they will to see things with the same eyes, things insist on looking unlike to them. Lucy's idea of a future home had been slowly shaping itself in her mind. A cŏttage meant to her a solid, embowered, and inviting stone house, with bays and recessed portico and mullioned windows, all smothered in guelder roses and

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vibrant with the songs of birds. She had probably caught this picture insensibly from some English book, and it was associated in her mind with beehives and nodding poppies and vistas of lawns and hedgerows. John, on the other hand, probably saw the thing in its crudest and most elemental condition, and found all his satisfaction in creating the other thing out of it. This is the difference, as you shall see, between the masculine and feminine point of view. John was to find out that what he wanted was not to be had for the asking. He cut advertisement after advertisement from the papers, and he went off on many journeys of inspection and learned a good many sound lessons before he got through.

The first of these journeys would have dampened the ardor of almost anybody. He had cut from a newspaper the following advertisement:

"For Sale—on Long Island, farm of twelve acres, with cottage in good condition; thirty-five miles from City Hall. Good, productive, healthy site. Terms easy. Apply to Ira Quick, Limecliff, Long Island."

Sunday morning was selected, and John took his wife with him. The railroad did not reach Limecliff by two miles, but they encountered Mr. Ira Quick at the last station, where he kept a livery stable, and he promptly offered to drive them down. The way was not inspiring. They crossed vast downs, studded with advertisements; they passed through one or two nascent cities, rectangularly laid out but not yet budding into houses. They sped along against a brisk wind, seeing very few signs of spring. The skunk cabbage showed green spots in the lowlands, and there were some verdant gleams of grass in sheltered places. A premature bluebird twittered occasionally. The general aspect was raw, unkempt, and barren, save where German women, despite the day, were working in their truck gardens.

"Think of farming?" asked Mr. Quick, who was a short, thickset, black-whiskered man with a horsey air, a large watch-chain, and a cigar, which latter he used mainly for masticating purposes.

"In a small way," answered John evasively.

"Chicken farming?"

"No, sir," emphatically.

"Well, you see it sets that way generally with most of the city people. I thought I'd ask. Tried it before, maybe."

"I am simply looking for a place that will furnish me with a suitable home."

"And we are quite particular about appearances," added Lucy; "it must be inviting as well as productive."

"Then you've struck it between the eyes, and dirt cheap," said Mr. Quick. "Want a place, I dare say now, that will suit the lady—no mosquitoes, chance for lawns, flower-beds, and all that sort of thing. I've just got it."

Mr. Quick being a horse man was very anxious about the high-stepping team that he was driving, which was unusually fresh, and once or twice he got out and gave his attention to the harness. The roads were in that condition that is experienced only in the early spring after a long frost. They had been cut up into heavy furrows by the truck wagons of the farmers, and had frozen into cast-iron ridges, the outer surface of which the warm sun was now converting into a slippery slime, so that the light wheels of the vehicle slipped and fell and twisted about in a manner that produced upon Lucy the effect of a very large Faradic current. She was beginning to experience a pain in her back when Mr. Quick ran his horses up to a board fence, and jumping out, began to tighten his straps here and there. His two companions surveyed the landscape in silence. It was an open prospect, for Long Island at its best is not alpine. They saw one house, not unlike an exaggerated dog kennel, sticking up in the near distance and breaking the horizon line as a buoy in the ocean might do it.

"Anything the matter with your harness?" asked John. "How much farther have we to go?"

"No farther. This is the place. You'd better get out here where it is hard."

"You sit still," said John, "and I'll go and take a peep at it."

"But where is the cottage?" she asked. "Let us drive to that. It's more important than the soil."

"There you are," said Mr. Quick, pointing to the dog kennel.

"That lonely thing?" asked Lucy with unbounded amazement, standing up in the vehicle.

"Looks a little rough this time of year, you know," said Mr. Quick. "You won't

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"A COTTAGE MEANT TO HER A SOLID, EMBOWERED, AND INVITING STONE HOUSE."

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know it in two weeks. I s'pose you understand," he added, turning to John, "that the real advantage of this country is that we've got the Gulf Stream within reach. The farmers up State would give a good deal to have the Gulf Stream flowing past their acres. Why, we're three weeks ahead of Jersey with our peas, and as for spinach, well, sir, it'll squeeze through the snow if you don't watch it. Let me show you the house."

"I don't think we care to see the

"HE CUT ADVERTISEMENT AFTER ADVERTISEMENT FROM THE PAPERS."

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THE "GULF STREAM" HOUSE.

inside," said Lucy; "it wouldn't suit us."

John was not so rigid. "I think we'd better look at it now we're here."

"Of course," observed Mr. Quick, leading the way, "you are a practical man and understand it's the soil that tells the story. What you want is a fine, sandy loam with a tight subsoil, isn't it?"

"What's the price of this property?" asked John, cutting him short.

"How high do you want to go, Colonel, for a farm? I have refused fifteen hundred dollars, spot cash, for this eligible piece. Did you think of doing anything in cabbages?"

"What is the use of our looking at this place, John?" said Lucy.

"Because if you did," continued Mr. Quick, ignoring the lady entirely, "I can give you a pointer—stick to the early Wakefield. If there's any cabbage in the market that the Gulf Stream takes to, it's the Early Wakefield. There will be a great rush down here in a year or two. The papers hav'n't worked the Gulf Stream yet. Now's your time to jump in."

This experience stuck up in Lucy's memory for a long time, like the sharp roof of that house. She never forgot the forlorn aspect of the cottage, and she always referred to it as the "Gulf Stream residence." To her eye it was like a lost spar in the ocean, and she thought of herself clinging to it and waiting for her husband night after night, making his way from the nearest station. When she parted with Mr. Quick, it was with something of a suppressed hatred of him, as if he had made a dastardly attempt to smash her ideal, and he, with an easy combination of horsey courtesy and rough irony, tipped his hat to her and invited her to come down again when the weather was settled. "There might be a triumphal arch or two and a pianer on the lawn, seeing that those were modern conveniences when a man wants to farm."

Altogether this experience was an unfortunate one, and yet it taught John several useful lessons. One was not to prospect on Sunday; another was to make some inquiries by mail before spending money on railroad

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"LONG ISLAND, AT ITS BEST, IS NOT ALPINE."

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trips, and above all not to take his wife until he had made a preliminary examination. "Good Heavens," he said to himself, "if I wanted her to plant roses, I wouldn't take her into the manure heap with me first."

But John was not discouraged. At the solicitation of a friend he investigated Staten Island. But that beautiful sea-swept domain seemed to him, on examination, to be a very delightful metropolitan convenience only, where happy people, mainly in search of sea air, could always have the city in sight and be quite sure that it would not disappear while they were bathing or cutting their lawns. Its accessible nearness was not an advantage to him. He thought he detected in the worried aspect of some of his business friends who lived there, a continual responsibility with regard to the ferry-boat. They held their watches in their hands at the theatre, and generally hurried out before the play was over. The atmosphere of the city extended to Staten Island. (Since John made his visit the authority as well as the atmosphere of the city has extended there.) When he inquired what a man could do for himself on a piece of ground 100 x 50, he was triumphantly told that he could fill his lungs with sea air, and to John's practical sense this seemed an insufficient pastime.

Then he journeyed up the Hudson as far as Scarborough to look at a snug little farm on the hills. Here, again, he fell into the persuasive arms of an agent. Scarborough is a delightful hamlet just above Tarrytown, lying in a cove of its own, and forever gazing into Haverstraw Bay with dreamful eyes. The snug farm was a mile and a half from the station. There were seven acres and the remnants of a solid old-fashioned farmhouse thereon, canopied by some ancient apple trees. But stretching away on either hand were vast parks; great preserves of the men who, instead of going to Paris when they die, take it out of the Hudson while they live. The price of this remnant of former agricultural days was six thousand dollars. It took John's breath away, but the agent pointed out the view and the neighbors. "You have the Beekmans on one side and the Rhinelanders on the other. You can look into the Rockefellers' grounds from your second-story window, and throw a pitchfork over into the Shepards' from your barn. There is no other place on earth where land brings you into such good society."

"But I'm not buying land to get into good society," said John.

"No?" queried the agent, with a slight loss of respect in his manner. "Not trying to get out of it, I hope?"

"Well, yes—rather."

"Hav'n't you come to the wrong market?" asked the agent. "Perhaps you'll object to the view."

"No—only to the price."

"That's what we're selling up here. You ought to go over the ridge on the Northern Railroad. Why don't you try Elmsford? Property drops a couple of hundred dollars an acre as soon as you get out of sight of this noble river."

This astonishing piece of information was verified by subsequent examinations, and John learned by slow degrees that a man with only two or three thousand dollars could not afford topographical æstheticism. He was also slowly learning that there was a distinction, sharp and clear, between rural and rustic. Rural meaning country life that does not relinquish the city, and rustic meaning country life that is independent of it,

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and doesn't care much more than a dollar and a half after haying time for it. To enjoy the unquestioned privilege of easy and uninterrupted railroad facilities, genteel neighbors, macadamized roads, picturesque surroundings, and above all, VIEW, was to become a suburbanite. He found that he could live thirty miles out on the Hudson, and come to the city every day at a commuting rate of eight dollars a month. He could get home at all hours. There were theatre trains all the year round, and all the morning papers for breakfast. In addition to this, one enthusiastic friend had told him that the price of land kept out an objectionable class of people, and they were rustics. Most of his friends had been buying modern conveniences in the rural market ready made, and were paying handsomely for the goods. Why was it not possible to construct beauty and independence your own way from the bottom up, with the safe assurance that the conveniences would come along in the course of time?

April and May had slipped away and part of June was gone. As the warm weather overtook him and his wife in the cheap flat, he began to get restless. He felt that he had deprived his wife of many of the comforts and luxuries of a genteel home, to which she was entitled, with a plea of great achievements, and so far they had come to naught. Lucy did not upbraid him in words, nor did she complain, but her appearance itself was a continual reproach. He saw that she was wearing her old dresses, and that the drudgery of economy and a narrow routine were beginning to tell in her face. Much of her enthusiasm had cooled and the embowered cottage of her dreams had receded under the pressure of trivial and incessant duties. But, woman-like, she did her best to disguise this from her husband, and when he had fits of discouragement, she cheered him up. "Don't get blue, John," she would say, "you will accomplish your purpose in time. Have patience." But a man is usually so built that patience in inaction is an impossibility. That is why he is such an inferior invalid to a woman. If he cannot overcome, he collapses.

"Sweetheart," he said to Lucy one sultry morning, "you must get out of this with the boy. Go away to the seaside. Go home to Holyoke. Do anything for a change, before the summer is over. I'll rough it here without you."

"That's very well meant, John," she said, "but it wouldn't make it any pleasanter when I got back. I'm all right as I am, but I would like to send Harold away till fall. It does seem to be a shame to coop him up here all summer. Wesley and Kate have gone to Narragansett Pier, I suppose, by this time, for their vacation."

"Yes," said John, rather resenting the suggestion, "and it will cost them ten dollars a day. What will they have when they get back?"

"I can't imagine, unless it should be brighter spirits and better appetites."

"By Heavens," said John, flaring up instantly, "you shall go to Newport or Cape May and spend twenty dollars a day if you say the word. I can afford it better than Wesley, and you have earned it. All you have to do is to crook your finger."

After this he gave his attention to the railroads that focussed themselves in Jersey City. In a broad way he conceived of them as running off southward to genial climes through Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Maryland, but beset anywhere within reach of New York City by populous manufacturing centres. His recollection of journeys in that direction when going to Philadelphia or Washington, was of Newark, Passaic, Trenton, Elizabeth, hives of workers, with an atmosphere of smoke, and who retained in their communal aspects the groupings of the great masses in New York. Somehow it seemed to him that he did not belong to these energetic toilers, and could not take his wife into a manufacturing district.

Unguided and undetermined, he one day looked down the long lists of stations duly scheduled under clock faces in the Erie depot. There were so many branches of travel that they tangled themselves in his mind. He wondered at the innumerable towns that he had never heard of and could not fix on the map. But some of the names sounded pleasant and inviting: Ferndale, Hohokus, Mount Ivy, Oradell, Riveredge. One of these columns ended suddenly with Suffern, as if that were a kind of pastoral limit, and Suffern he knew by reputation. He remembered that an old friend of his father's lived somewhere in that vicinity. The next minute he had bought his ticket and was climbing aboard an Erie train, guided only by a sudden impulse. In an hour and a quarter he was at the little station, looking about him at the great gap in

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WHAT JOHN JENNISON WENT TO SEE—AND WHAT HE FOUND.

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the mountains, and wondering to find himself so suddenly at this unexpected alpine gateway through which one must pass to traverse the State.

If the reader will stop here a moment and look at the map of the country immediately west of the Hudson, he will see an arbitrary line, drawn diagonally from a point on the Hudson River a few miles below Piermont, running northwest through the middle of Greenwood Lake, and ending against one of the outlying spurs of the Blue Ridge. This is the New Jersey State line, and north of it lies an interesting triangle, each side of

"HE GAVE HIS ATTENTION TO THE RAILROADS THAT FOCUSSED THEMSELVES IN JERSEY CITY."

which is twenty miles long and which encloses two hundred and eight square miles. This is Rockland County, New York. Its northern point is not more than fifty miles from the City Hall in Manhattan, and its southern limit now comes within a pistol-shot of the extended city. But to this great dense and tumultuous world, the domain is virtually a *terra incognita*. It is known only by its suburban towns here and there on the Hudson, such as Stony Point, Nyack, and Rockland Lake, or Suffern and Tuxedo on the Western trunk line of the Erie road. Between those points lies, in its original serenity and wildness, an unknown pastoral tract of diversified beauty, untouched by the hand of speculation, and undisturbed by enterprise. Its roads are possibly the worst in the State. Its railroad facilities are uncertain and wide apart. Its villages are isolated and moss grown. Its inhabitants, save along the boundaries where travel goes by, are the descendants of the original Hollanders who settled it, and who have left upon it their incorrigible antipathy to change or improvement.

Originally this tract of country was included in Orange County, and the whole domain flowed with milk if not with honey. Our fathers identified milk and cheese with Orange County, and felt grateful to Rockland Lake in what they called the heated term, for it furnished them with ice. Further than this the world was not interested. Two trunk railroads now traverse the county. But they give little heed to it, for they concentrate their attention to what is called "through travel." Rockland County is regarded in an indulgent way as something to be crossed in getting out of or coming into New York City.

This bit of history and topography is necessary if one is to understand the surprise of a man like John Dennison when he finds himself left by the ongoing railroad at such a station as Suffern. He feels that he has severed the link that connects him with a competing and conquering world. He ought to have gone on. If he leaves the safe vicinity of the railroad, and goes through the gap of the hills into Rockland County, he will be lost in a Beulah Land, where there are no trolleys, no asphalt, no building associations, no department stores, no roof gardens, no ambulances, no slums. Nothing but sleepy old roads with stone fences on either side covered with bittersweet and blackberry vines; nothing but old houses hiding among lonely cloisters of beech and butternut. Somewhere the little Mahwah River will come flashing and singing down from the hills to join the Ramapo, and together they will set out wandering in the most reckless manner to find the Passaic, and then they have fallen nine hundred feet, for that is the height at which the man stands in upper Rockland County above sea level, and, save for the distance, he would have to look down at his feet to find it.

Such absolute rusticity so near to the great city cannot be found in any other

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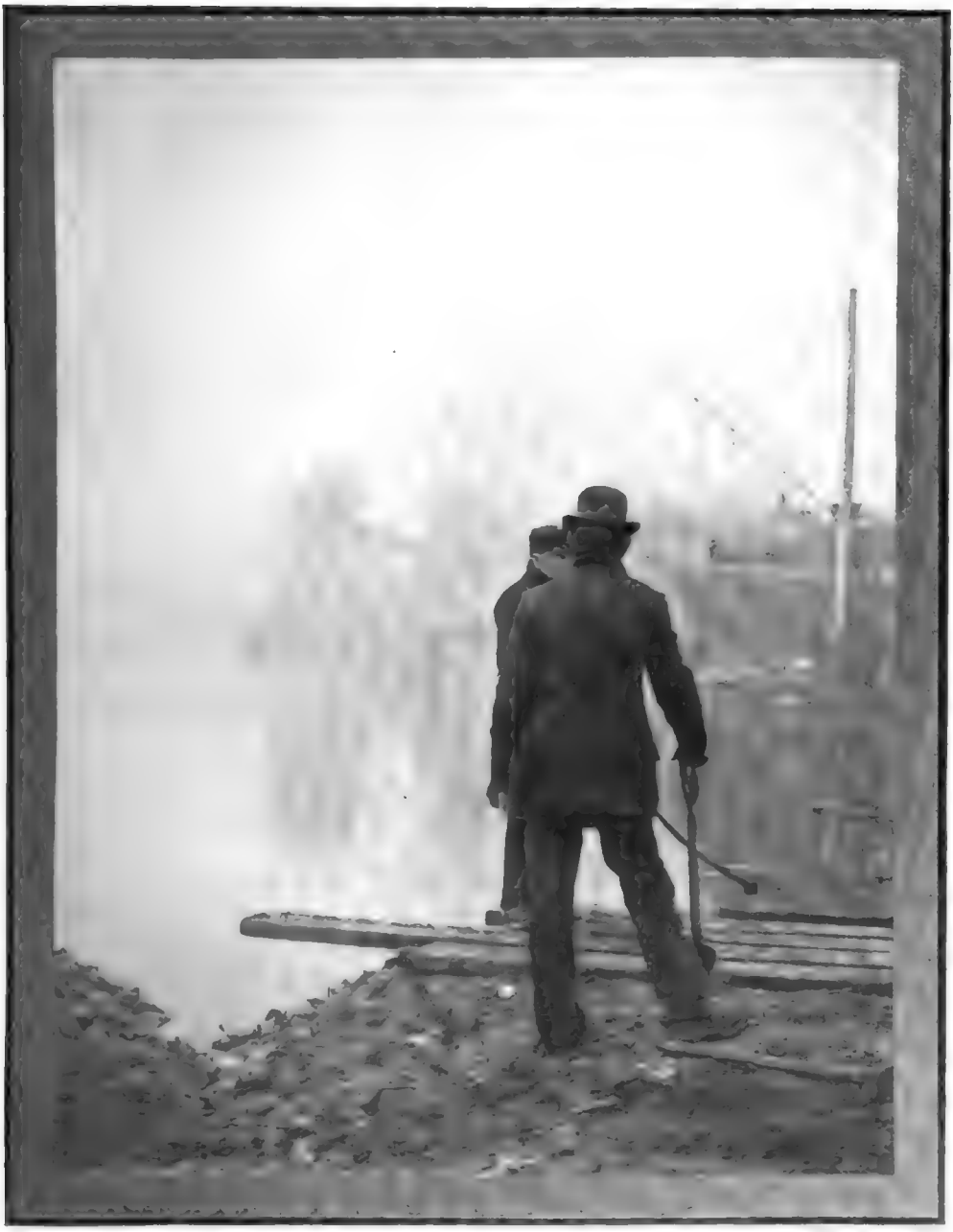

"HIVES OF WORKERS, WITH AN ATMOSPHERE OF SMOKE."

direction. From any of the highest points one can always see at night the great electric aureole of Manhattan in the southern sky. From Mount Ivy one can discern with a glass the pier of the Brooklyn Bridge when the air is clear. From the knolls of Tuxedo the mists and reflections of the Atlantic shimmer low down in the east, and from the jagged peak of the Thor at Haverstraw, the waterway at its feet spreads out into an inland sea and lies like a shining pathway to the Narrows.

John went into the nearest village store and inquired for Philip Swarthout. The

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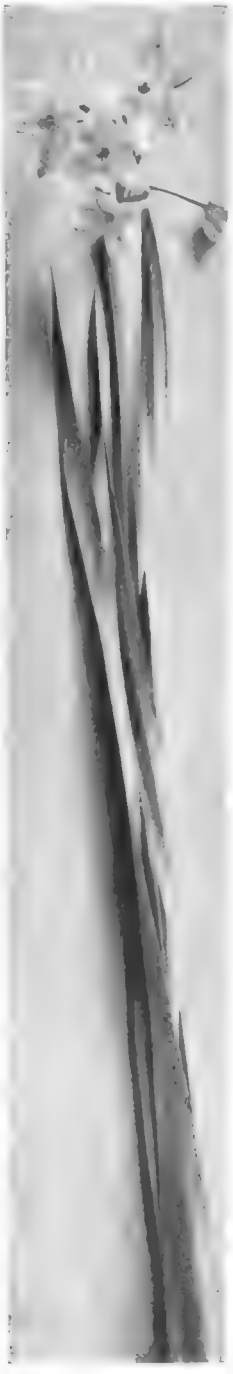
young man who was drawing molasses asked him if he meant Pop Swarthout—he was over back three miles. John got the direction, went to a livery stable, hired a buggy, and set out eastward to find Pop Swarthout. He said afterwards that as soon as he left the village he felt like a man who had lost the combination. In ten minutes he had abandoned the last vestige of metropolitan life. He looked about in vain for the familiar advertisements on the rocks. One or two daintily dressed bicyclists passed him as they hurried back to their summer boarding-houses in Suffern. He jogged leisurely along the road, which was on a low terrace that followed the curves of a little river, and was buttressed on the other side with the great hills whose redundant vegetation swept down to the highway itself, and often completely arbored it with oaks and chestnuts. As he left the sound of the coughing locomotives behind, songs of birds and the murmur of the water enhanced the drowsy stillness. The smell of hay came heavily down the valley, and he could at intervals hear the click of the machines in the distant meadows. Occasional shingle roofs peeped from the trees in the middle distance, giving evidence of carefully screened and modest residences, but there were no gentlemen's grounds, no park palings, no preserves. Everything wore a luxurious and tangled unconventionality. The hedgerows bent over the roads in inextricable snarls of dogwood and elderberry. The paths wound through waving June grass and timothy. Agriculture had not parted company with landscape. Most of the houses that he passed were separated by long and often half-wild tracts. But there were comfortable, unpretentious, and unmistakably country houses, half hidden by old trees and wearing heavy veils of Virginia creeper and wild trumpet-honeysuckle. Nearly always they were surrounded by old gardens in which phlox and lady slippers and tansy were conspicuously mixed.



It was evident to John that he had reached a country where both the Gulf Stream and the human stream had ceased from troubling, and where, he suspected, it might be always afternoon. When he had gone about two miles he came to an old-fashioned white picket fence running along the road, with a piece of white paper tacked on the gate post. He got out and read it: "This house for rent. Inquire of Philip Swarthout." The house stood about fifty feet from the road. It was an old red sandstone affair, a simple parallelogram without ornament, except the climbing roses had covered one end of it. It stood in the centre of a wooded area, several fine old trees throwing their shadows across it. He tied his horse and went into the enclosure. The path was overgrown with waving June grass. He knocked at the door, and after several knocks receiving no answer, he walked round to the rear, and was surprised to find a big porch running the entire length, and flanked at one end by a honey locust and at the other by an apple tree. The ground swept in a gentle slope to the river, which he could see flashing and dancing through the trees, as it wound along a lush meadow. He sat down on the step of the porch and enjoyed it. The Ramapo Mountains rose up in the west, with their forests and cliffs sharply defined, and in the gaps he could see the billowy distances of the Blue Ridge. It was a singularly restful and beautiful scene, and he wished he had brought Lucy with him. "I wonder," he said with unconscious irony, "what this view is worth—probably something utterly beyond my means." He knocked at the rear door and got no

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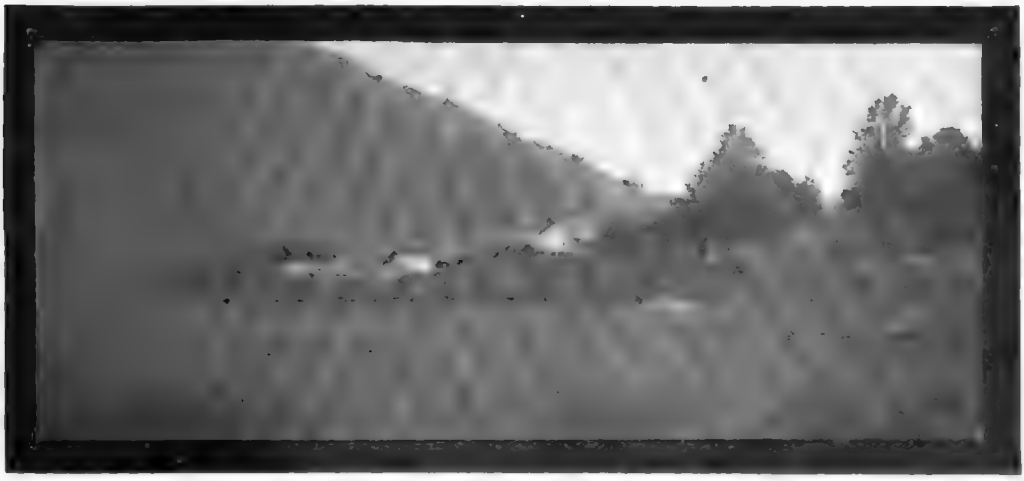
"THE PATHS WOUND THROUGH WAVING JUNE GRASS AND TIMOTHY."

answer, but mechanically trying the knob, it opened into a little vestibule. He knocked again, but there was no response. He looked in at the nearest room. The sun was pouring in through the festoons of roses round the deep windows. There were several pieces of furniture of antique shape and a rug or two, but the place smelled of soot. He walked to the window and admired the deep stone sill with its drift of rose leaves in the corners. The breastwork of a brick chimney projected into the room, and the fireplace was closed with a framed canvas upon which were painted, in a bold artistic way, some ferns and cat tails. A few imprisoned wasps were weakly crawling over the panes. When he tried to open the window he found that it was nailed fast, and he wondered why any one should nail the windows and leave the doors open.

Then John went out again upon the porch, and noticed for the first time a pail with a scrubbing brush in it and a new broom lying close beside it. This was like Crusoe's discovery of the footprint, and almost immediately there rose up from the June grass a stalwart maid, with high cheek bones, cold, blue eyes, and a gaping mouth full of white teeth, with her sleeves rolled up and her red hands on her hips, looking at him with astonishment.

"I was just examining the house," said John. "I see it is to be rented. Where is Mr. Swarthout?"



"OCCASIONAL SHINGLE ROOFS PEEPED FROM THE TREES."

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The girl, still staring, said: "He? He's in the grass."

"Good Heavens!" said John. "How long since it happened? I didn't know he was dead."

"He ain't dead. He's gettin' in his early hay—over there," and she pointed one bare arm in an uncertain direction. "Are you hiring it?"

"Well, I might be. Do you live in it?"

"No, I'm going to clean it."

She pointed once more with her arm, and John set out to find Mr. Swarthout.

He discovered him at last in his hay field superintending the men who were getting in his crop. He must have been at least eighty years old, but he had that shrivelled activity and sly acumen which belong to these veterans of the field, and he handled a rake with easy dexterity. When John told him who he was, the old man looked him all over, grunted, and said: "Yes, I knew your father. He'd known better than to make a visit in haying time."

John saw the significant looks of the men, as if they were saying to each other: "Oh, the old man will take the conceit out of him."

"I didn't come to make you a visit," said John. "I wanted to inquire about a piece of property you have for rent. If I interfere with your haying, I will find somebody else whose hay doesn't interfere with his humor," and John turned on his heel.

"Hold on," said the old man, throwing down his rake. "Want to rent, do ye? Tell you how it is. I've got a nice piece of grass here, and these men are workin' by the day. You see I wanted to get it in." This was meant to be apologetic.

"Perhaps you'd better not bother with me then," said John.

"So you're old John Dennison's son, be you? Come from the city, I s'pose."

"You've got a house down there on the road with a bill on it which says apply to you. Have you time to give me some information?"

"Gosh, 'pears to me you air in a hurry."

"Not at all; I have plenty of time, more time than patience, as you might say."

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The old man drew him on one side. "Want to hire for the summer, I s'pose?"

"I'll tell you what I want to do when I know what you ask for the place."

"Well, now, young man, I'll tell you how it is, if you'll let me do it in my way. I built that stun house sixty year ago. There's a bit of seven acres that I set off to go with it when I sold it."

"Sold it? Isn't it yours?"

"Yes—it's mine. I sold it, but it came back to me. Country property has a way of doin' that, specially when men that buy hav'n't got much patience. Then, you see, I rented it; calculated to get the interest on it. It's worth a hundred dollars an acre. Countin' the house in, I expect to get fifteen hundred dollars for it. At six per cent. that would be ninety dollars a year. I've got that for three months in the summer. Did you think o' buyin'?"

"Had a notion of that kind," said John. "Did you think of selling?"

"Sell anything I've got 'cept the family Bible, if I git me own price. Let me see, what kind o' business did you say you was in?"

"Real estate business at present," said John, throwing out his chest.

"S'pose you come down to the house," said the old man. "I guess these men will get along for a bit without my watchin' 'em. I calculate you won't stay up here more'n three months, and I'd have to ask you the same rate as fer a year."

"If I come here at all," replied John, "I shall live here permanently. Do I understand you to say that you will take fifteen hundred dollars for the house and five acres?"

"That's what I'm askin'. It's an old-fashioned house, but it's solid, and so am I, young man."

"There is some furniture in the place. Whom does that belong to?"

"It belongs to me. There was a pair of gadding young painters hired the house last summer, and I had to furnish it. You don't do any painting, do you?"

"I'll make a thorough examination of the property and give you an answer before three o'clock to-morrow," said John. "You'll have your hay in by that time, I suppose."

The old man's eye twinkled a little. "I've got two hands yet," he said. "One of 'em can fix your business whenever you're ready."

John thought that one of them might have been extended more cordially, but he only said: "All right, I've got two that are disengaged. I'll use them both between now and three o'clock to-morrow. Good-morning."

"Hold on, young man, you're a deal younger than I be and do things on the jump. You'll have to hire that horse agin to come back here."

"Certainly."

"Well, if you stop here you won't have to. You might as well save a dollar where you can. I'll send your horse back."

"Thank you," said John; "I might be in the way."

"I dare say," replied the old man. "Young men who jump about as you do are very apt to be, but we might do some business while you're skipping round."

That was the way in which rustic hospitality lumbered up in the rear of business.

So John stayed there, and the next day he surprised himself and then surprised Lucy.

But for that we shall have to go to the next chapter.

(To be continued.)

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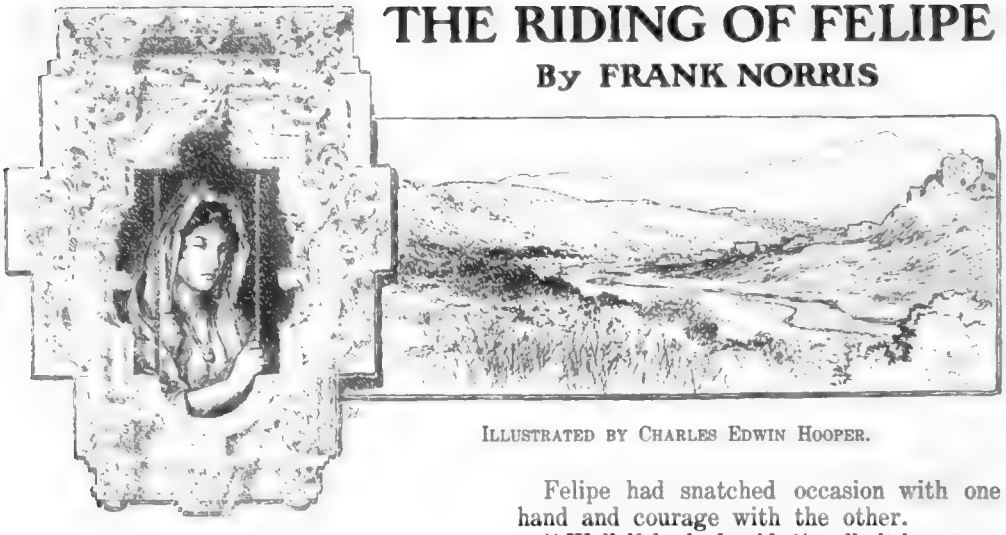

THE RIDING OF FELIPE

By FRANK NORRIS

ILLUSTRATED BY CHARLES EDWIN HOOPER.

I.

FELIPE.

As young Felipe Arillaga guided his pony out of the last intricacies of Pacheco Pass, he was thinking of Rubia Ytuerate and of the scene he had had with her a few days before. He reconstructed it now very vividly. Rubia had been royally angry, and as she had stood there before him, her arms folded and her teeth set, he was forced to admit that she was as handsome a woman as could be found through all California.

There had been a time, three months past, when Felipe found no compulsion in the admission, for though betrothed to Buelna Martiarena, he had abruptly conceived a violent infatuation for Rubia, and had remained a guest upon her rancho many weeks longer than he had intended.

For three months he had forgotten Buelna entirely. At the end of that time he had remembered her, had awakened to the fact that his infatuation for Rubia *was* infatuation, and had resolved to end the affair and go back to Buelna as soon as it was possible.

But Rubia was quick to notice the cooling of his passion. First she fixed him with oblique suspicion from under her long lashes, then avoided him, then kept him at her side for days together. Then at last—his defection unmistakable—turned on him with furious demands for the truth.

Felipe had snatched occasion with one hand and courage with the other.

"Well," he had said, "well, it is not my fault. Yes, it is the truth. It is played out."

He had not thought it necessary to speak of Buelna; but Rubia divined the other woman.

"So you think you are to throw me aside like that. Ah, it is played out, is it, Felipe Arillaga? You listen to me. Do not fancy for one moment you are going back to an old love, or on to a new one. You listen to me," she had cried, her fist over her head. "I do not know who she is, but my curse is on her, Felipe Arillaga. My curse is on her who next kisses you. May that kiss be a blight to her. From that moment may evil cling to her, bad luck follow her, may she love and not be loved, may friends desert her, enemies beset her, her sisters shame her, her brothers disown her, and those whom she has loved abandon her. May her body waste as your love for me has wasted, may her heart be broken as your promises to me have been broken, may her joy be as fleeting as your vows, and her beauty grow as dim as your memory of me. I have said it."

"So be it!" Felipe had retorted with vast nonchalance, and had flung out from her presence to saddle his pony and start back to Buelna.

But Felipe was superstitious. He half believed in curses, had seen two-headed calves born because of them, and sheep stampeded over cliffs for no other reason.

Now as he drew out of Pacheco Pass and came down into the valley the idea of Rubia

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"'MY CURSE IS ON HER WHO NEXT KISSES YOU.'"

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and her curse troubled him. At first, when yet three days' journey from Buelna, it had been easy to resolve to brave it out. But now he was already on the Rancho Martiarena (had been travelling over it for the last ten hours, in fact), and in a short time would be at the *hacienda* of Martiarena, uncle and guardian of Buelna. He would see Buelna, and she, believing always in his fidelity, would expect to kiss him.

"Well, this is to be thought about," murmured Felipe uneasily.

He touched up the pony with one of his enormous spurs.

"Now I know what I will do," he thought. "I will go to San Juan Bautista and confess and be absolved, and will buy candles. Then afterwards will go to Buelna."

He found the road that led to the Mission, and turned into it, pushing forward at a canter. Then suddenly at a sharp turning reined up just in time to avoid colliding with a little cavalcade.

He uttered an exclamation under his breath.

At the head of the cavalcade rode old Martiarena himself, and behind him came a *peon* or two, then Manuela, the aged housekeeper and—after a fashion—duenna. Then at her side, on a saddle of red leather with silver bosses, which was cinched about the body of a very small white burro, Buelna herself.

She was just turned sixteen, and being of the best blood of the mother kingdom (the strain dating back to the Ostrogothic invasion), was fair. Her hair was blonde, her eyes blue-gray, her eyebrows and lashes dark brown, and as he caught sight of her, Felipe wondered how he ever could have believed the swarthy Rubia beautiful.

There was a jubilant meeting. Old Martiarena kissed both his cheeks, patting him on the back.

"Oh, ho!" he cried. "Once more back. We have just returned from the feast of the Santa Cruz at the Mission, and Buelna prayed for your safe return. Go to her, boy. She has waited long for this hour."

Felipe, his eyes upon those of his betrothed, advanced. She was looking at him and smiling. As he saw the unmistakable light in her blue eyes, the light he knew she had kept burning for him alone, Felipe could have abased himself to the very hoofs of her burro. Could it be possible he had ever forgotten her for such a one as Rubia, have been unfaithful to this dear girl for so much as the smallest fraction of a minute?

"You are welcome, Felipe," she said. "Oh, very, very welcome." She gave him her hand, and turned her face to his. But it was her hand and not her face the young man kissed. Old Martiarena, who looked on, shook with laughter.

"Hoh! a timid lover this," he called. "We managed different when I was a lad. Her lips, Felipe. Must an old man teach a youngster gallantry?"

Buelna blushed and laughed, but yet did not withdraw her hand nor turn her face away. There was a delicate expectancy in her manner that she nevertheless contrived to make compatible with her native modesty. Felipe had been her acknowledged lover ever since the two were children.

"Well?" cried Martiarena as Felipe hesitated.

Even then, if Felipe could have collected his wits, he might have saved the situation for himself. But no time had been allowed him to think. Confusion seized upon him. All that was clear in his mind were the last words of Rubia. It seemed to him that between his lips he carried a poison deadly to Buelna above all others. Stupidly, brutally he precipitated the catastrophe.

"No," he exclaimed seriously, abruptly drawing his hand from Buelna's, "no. It may not be. I cannot."

Martiarena stared. Then:

"Is this a jest, señor?" he demanded. "An ill-timed one, then."

"No," answered Felipe, "it is not a jest."

"But, Felipe," murmured Buelna. "But—why—I do not understand."

"I think I begin to," cried Martiarena.

"Señor, you do not," protested Felipe. "It is not to be explained. I know what you believe. On my honor, I love Buelna."

"Your actions give you the lie then, young man. Bah! Nonsense. What fool's play is all this. Kiss him, Buelna, and have done with it."

Felipe gnawed his nails.

"Believe me, oh, believe me, Señor Martiarena, it must not be."

"Then an explanation."

For a moment Felipe hesitated. But how could he tell them the truth, the truth that involved Rubia and his disloyalty, temporary though that was. They could neither understand nor forgive. Here, indeed, was an

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impasse. One thing only was to be said, and he said it. "I can give you no explanation," he murmured.

But Buelna suddenly interposed.

"Oh, please," she said, pushing by Felipe, "uncle, we have talked too long. Please let us go. There is only one explanation. Is it not enough already?"

"By God, it is not!" vociferated the old man, turning upon Felipe. "Tell me what it means. Tell me what this means."

"I cannot."

"Then I will tell *you!*" shouted the old fellow in Felipe's face. "It means that you are a liar and a rascal. That you have played with Buelna, and that you have deceived me, who have trusted you as a father would have trusted a son. I forbid you to answer me. For the sake of what you were I spare you now. But this I will do. Off of my rancho!" he cried. "Off my rancho, and in the future pray your God, or the devil to whom you are sold, to keep you far from me."

"You do not understand, you do not understand," pleaded Felipe, the tears starting to his eyes. "Oh, believe me, I speak the truth. I love your niece. I love Buelna. Oh, never so truly, never so devotedly as now. Let me speak to her, she will believe me."

But Buelna, weeping, had ridden on.

II.

UNZAR.

A fortnight passed. Soon a month had gone by. Felipe gloomed about his rancho, solitary, taciturn, riding the sheep-walks and cattle-ranges for days and nights together, refusing all intercourse with his friends. It seemed as if he had lost Buelna for good and all. At times, as the certainty of this defined itself more clearly, Felipe would fling his hat upon the ground, beat his breast, and then, prone upon his face, his head buried in his folded arms, would lie for hours motionless, while his pony nibbled the sparse alfalfa, and the jack-rabbits limping from the sage peered at him, their noses wrinkling.

But about a month after the meeting and parting with Buelna word went through all the ranchos that a hide-roger had cast anchor in Monterey Bay. At once an abrupt access of activity seized upon the rancheros. Rodéos were held, sheep slaughtered, and the great tallow-pits began to fill up.

Felipe was not behind his neighbors, and his tallow once in hand, sent it down to Monterey, and himself rode down to see about disposing of it.

On his return he stopped at the wineshop of one Lopez Catala, on the road between Monterey and his rancho.

It was late afternoon when he reached it, and the wineshop was deserted. Outside, the California August lay withering and suffocating over all the land. The far hills were burnt to dry, hay-like grass and brittle clods. The eucalyptus trees in front of the wineshop (the first trees Felipe had seen all that day), were coated with dust. The plains of sage-brush and the alkali flats shimmered and exhaled pallid mirages, glistening like inland seas. Over all blew the trade wind; prolonged, insistent, harassing, swooping up the red dust of the road and the white powder of the alkali beds, and flinging it—white and red banners in a sky of burnt-out blue—here and there about the landscape.

The wineshop, which was also an inn, was isolated, lonely, but it was comfortable, and Felipe decided to lay over there that night, then in the morning reach his rancho by an easy stage.

He had his supper—an omelet, cheese, tortillas, and a glass of wine—and afterwards sat outside on a bench smoking innumerable cigarettes and watching the sun set.

While he sat so a young man of about his own age rode up from the eastward with a great flourish, and giving over his horse to the *muchacho*, entered the wineshop and ordered dinner and a room for the night. Afterwards he came out and stood in front of the inn and watched the *muchacho* cleaning his horse.

Felipe, looking at him, saw that he was of his own age and about his own build; that is to say, twenty-eight or thirty, and tall and lean. But in other respects the difference was great. The stranger was flamboyantly dressed: skin-tight pantaloons, fastened all up and down the leg with round silver buttons; yellow boots with heels high as a girl's, set off with silver spurs; a very short coat faced with galloons of gold, and a very broad-brimmed and very high-crowned

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sombrero, on which the silver braid alone was worth the price of a good horse. Even for a Spanish Mexican his face was dark. Swart it was, the cheeks hollow; a tiny, tight mustache with ends truculently pointed and erect helped out the belligerency of the tight-shut lips. The eyes were black as bitumen, and flashed continually under heavy brows.

"THEY STRAINED BACK FROM EACH OTHER, THE FULL LENGTH OF THEIR LEFT ARMS."

"Perhaps," thought Felipe, "he is a *toréador* from Mexico."

The stranger followed his horse to the barn, but returning in a few moments stood before Felipe and said:

"Señor, I have taken the liberty to put my horse in the stall occupied by yours. Your beast the *muchacho* turned into the *corrale*. Mine is an animal of spirit, and in a *corrale* would fight with the other horses. I rely upon the señor's indulgence."

At ordinary times he would not have relied in vain. But Felipe's nerves were in a jangle these days, and his temper, since Buelna's dismissal of him, was bitter. His perception of offence was keen. He rose, his eyes upon the stranger's eyes.

"My horse is mine," he observed. "Only my friends permit themselves liberties with what is mine."

The other smiled scornfully, and drew from his belt a little pouch of gold dust.

"What I take I pay for," he remarked, and, still smiling, tendered Felipe a few grains of the gold.

Felipe struck the outstretched palm.

"Am I a *peon?*" he vociferated.

"Probably," retorted the other.

"I *will* take pay for that word," cried Felipe, his face blazing, "but not in your money, señor."

"In that case I may give you more than you ask."

"No, by God, for I shall take all you have."

But the other checked his retort. A sudden change came over him.

"I ask the señor's pardon," he said, with grave earnestness, "for provoking him. You may not fight with me nor I with you. I speak the truth. I have made oath not to fight till I have killed one whom now I seek."

"Very well, I too spoke without reflection. You seek an enemy, then, señor?"

"My sister's, who is therefore mine. An

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enemy truly. Listen, you shall judge. I am absent from my home a year, and when I return what do I find? My sister betrayed, deceived, flouted by a fellow, a nobody, whom she received a guest in her house, a fit return for kindness, for hospitality! Well, he answers to me for the dishonor."

"Wait. Stop!" interposed Felipe. "Your name, señor."

"Unzar Ytuerate, and my enemy is called Arillaga. Him I seek and——"

"Then you shall seek no farther!" shouted Felipe. "It is to Rubia Ytuerate, your sister, whom I owe all my unhappiness, all my suffering. She has hurt not me only, but one—but—Mother of God, we waste words," he cried. "Knife to knife, Unzar Ytuerate. I am Felipe Arillaga, and may God be thanked for the chance that brings this quarrel to my hand."

"You, you!" gasped Unzar. Fury choked him, his hands clutched and unclutched—now fists, now claws. His teeth grated sharply, while a quivering sensation as of a chill crisped his flesh. "Then the sooner the better," he muttered between his set teeth, and the knives flashed in the hands of the two men so suddenly that the gleam of one seemed only the reflection of the other.

Unzar held out his left wrist.

"Are you willing?" he demanded, with a significant glance.

"And ready," returned the other, baring his forearm.

Catala, keeper of the inn, was called.

"Love of the Virgin, not here, señors. My house—the alcalde——"

"You have a strap there." Unzar pointed to a bridle hanging from a peg by the doorway. "No words; quick; do as you are told."

The two men held out their left arms till wrist touched wrist, and Catala, trembling and protesting, lashed them together with a strap.

"Tighter," commanded Felipe; "put all your strength to it."

The strap was drawn up to another hole.

"Now, Catala, stand back," commanded Unzar, "and count three slowly. At the word 'three,' Señor Arillaga, we begin. You understand."

"I understand."

"Ready. . . . Count."

"One."

Felipe and Unzar each put his right hand grasping the knife behind his back as etiquette demanded.

"Two."

They strained back from each other, the full length of their left arms, till the nails grew bloodless.

"*Three!*" called Lopez Catala in a shaking voice.

III.

RUBIA.

When Felipe regained consciousness he found that he lay in an upper chamber of Catala's inn upon a bed. His shoulder, the right one, was bandaged, and so was his head. He felt no pain, only a little weak, but there was a comfortable sense of brandy at his lips, an arm supported his head, and the voice of Rubia Ytuerate spoke his name. He sat up on a sudden.

"Rubia, *you!*" he cried. "What is it? What happened? Oh, I remember, Unzar—we fought. Oh, my God, how we fought! But you—what brought you here?"

"Thank Heaven," she murmured, "you are better. You are not so badly wounded. As he fell he must have dragged you with him, and your head struck the threshold of the doorway."

"Is he badly hurt? Will he recover?"

"I hope so. But *you* are safe."

"But what brought you here?"

"Love," she cried, "my love for you. What I suffered after you had gone! Felipe, I have fought, too. Pride was strong at first, and it was pride that made me send Unzar after you. I told him what had happened. I hounded him to hunt you down. Then when he had gone my battle began. Ah, dearest, dearest, it all came back, our days together, the life we led knowing no other word but love, thinking no thoughts that were not of each other. And love conquered. Unzar was not a week gone before I followed him—to call him back, to shield you, to save you from his fury. I came all but too late, and found you both half dead. My brother and my lover, your body across his, your blood mingling with his own. But not too late to love you back to life again. Your life is mine now, Felipe. I love you, I love you." She clasped her hands together and pressed them to her cheek. "Ah, if you knew," she cried, "if you

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could only look into my heart. Pride is nothing, good name is nothing, friends are nothing. Oh, it is a glory to give them all for love, to give up everything; to surrender, to submit, to cry to one's heart, 'Take me, I am as wax. Take me, conquer me, lead me wherever you will. All is well lost so only that love remains.' And I have heard all that has happened—this other one, the Señorita Buelna, how that she forbade you her lands. Let her go, she is not worthy of your love, cold, selfish——"

"Stop!" cried Felipe, "you shall say no more evil of her. It is enough."

"Felipe, you love her yet?"

"And always, always will."

"She who has cast you off, she who disdains you, who will not suffer you on her lands? And have *you* come to be so low, so base, and mean as that?"

"I have sunk no lower than a woman who could follow after a lover who had grown manifestly cold."

"Ah," she answered sadly, "if I could so forget my pride as to follow you, do not think your reproaches can touch me now." Then suddenly she sank at the bedside and clasped his hand in both of hers. Her beautiful hair, unbound, tumbled about her shoulders, her eyes, swimming with tears, were turned up to his, her lips trembled with the intensity of her passion. In a voice low, husky, sweet as a dove's she addressed him. "Oh, dearest, come back to me, come back to me. Let me love you again. Don't you see my heart is breaking? There is only you in all the world for me. I was a proud woman once. See now what I have brought myself to. Don't let it all be in vain. If you fail me now think how it will be for me afterwards—to know that I—I, Rubia Ytuerate, have begged the love of a man and begged in vain. Do you think I could live knowing that?" Abruptly she lost control of herself. She caught him about the neck with both her arms. Almost incoherently her words rushed from her tight-shut teeth.

"Ah, I can *make* you love me. I can make you love me," she cried. "You shall come back to me. You are mine, and you cannot help but come back."

"'NO, . . . YOU SHALL NOT PUSH ME FROM YOU!'"

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"*Por Dios*, Rubia," he ejaculated, "remember yourself. You are out of your head."

"Come back to me."

"No."

"Come back to me, love me."

"No, no."

"You cannot push me from you," she cried, for, one hand upon her shoulder, he had sought to disengage himself. "No, I shall not let you go. You shall not push me from you! Thrust me off and I will embrace you all the closer. Yes, *strike* me if you will, and I will kiss you."

And with the words she suddenly pressed her lips to his.

Abruptly Felipe freed himself. A new thought suddenly leaped to his brain.

"Let your own curse return upon you," he cried. "You yourself have freed me, you yourself have broken the barrier you raised between me and my betrothed. You cursed her whose lips should next touch mine, and you are poisoned with your own venom."

He sprang from off the bed, and catching up his *serape*, flung it about his shoulders.

"Felipe," she cried, "Felipe, where are you going?"

"Back to Buelna," he shouted, and with the words rushed from the room. Her strength seemed suddenly to leave her. She sank lower to the floor, burying her face deep upon the pillows that yet retained the impress of him she loved so deeply, so recklessly.

Footsteps in the passage and a knocking at the door aroused her. A woman, one of the escort who had accompanied her, entered hurriedly.

"Señorita," cried this one, "your brother, the Señor Unzar, he is dying."

Rubia hurried to an adjoining room, where upon a mattress on the floor lay her brother.

"Put that woman out," he gasped as his glance met hers. "I never sent for you," he went on. "You are no longer sister of mine. It was you who drove me to this quarrel, and when I have vindicated you, what do you do? Your brother you leave to be tended by hirelings, while all your thought and care are lavished on your paramour. Go back to him. I know how to die alone, but as you go remember that in dying I hated and disowned you."

He fell back upon the pillows livid, dead.

Rubia started forward with a cry.

"It is you who have killed him," cried the woman who had summoned her. The rest of Rubia's escort, *vaqueros*, *peons*, and the old *alcalde* of her native village, stood about with bared heads.

"That is true. That is true," they murmured. The old *alcalde* stepped forward.

"Who dishonors my friend dishonors me," he said. "From this day, Señorita Ytuerate, you and I are strangers." He went out, and one by one, with sullen looks and hostile demeanor, Rubia's escort followed. Their manner was unmistakable; they were deserting her.

Rubia clasped her hands over her eyes.

"*Madre de Dios, Madre de Dios,*" she moaned over and over again. Then in a low voice she repeated her own words:

"May it be a blight to her. From that moment may evil cling to her, bad luck follow her, may she love and not be loved, may friends desert her, her sisters shame her, her brothers disown her——"

There was a clatter of horse's hoofs in the courtyard.

"It is your lover," said her woman coldly from the doorway. "He is riding away from you."

"—and those," added Rubia, "whom she has loved abandon her."

IV.

BUELNA.

Meanwhile Felipe, hatless, bloody, was galloping through the night, his pony's head turned toward the *hacienda* of Martiarena. The Rancho Martiarena lay between his own rancho and the inn where he had met Rubia, so that this distance was not great. He reached it in about an hour of vigorous spurring.

The place was dark, though it was as yet early in the night, and an ominous gloom seemed to hang about the house. Felipe, his heart sinking, pounded at the door, and at last aroused the aged superintendent, who was also a sort of *major domo* in the household, and who in Felipe's boyhood had often ridden him on his knee.

"Ah, it is you, Arillaga," he said very sadly, as the moonlight struck across Felipe's face. "I had hoped never to see you again."

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"Buelna," demanded Felipe. "I have something to say to her, and to the *padron*."

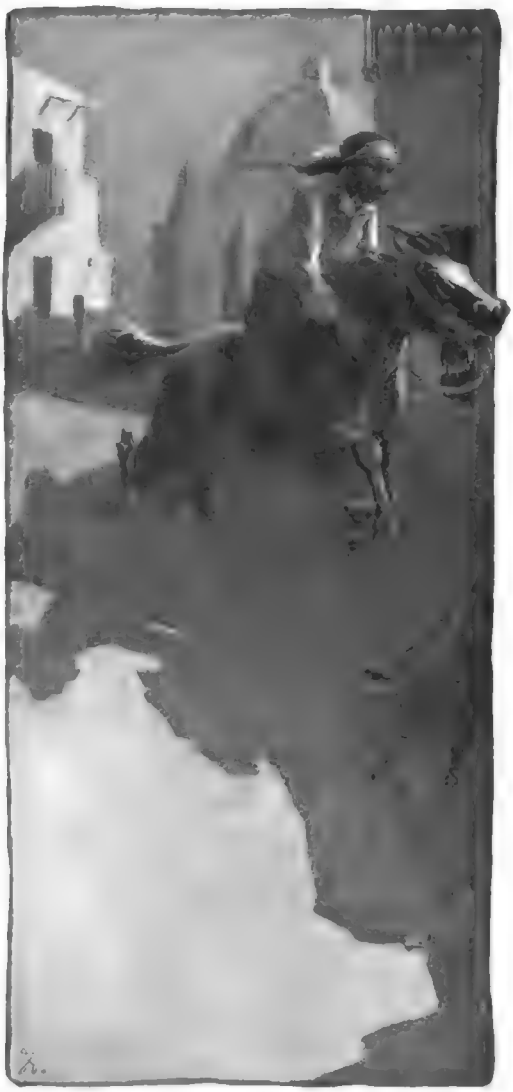
"Too late, señor."

"My God, dead?"

"As good as dead."

"Rafael, tell me all. I have come to set everything straight again. On my honor, I have been misjudged. Is Buelna well?"

"Listen. You know your own heart best, señor, When you left her our little lady was as one half dead; her heart died within her. Ah, she loved you, Arillaga, far more than you deserved. She drooped swiftly, and one night all but passed away. Then it was that she made a vow that if God spared her life she would become the bride of the church, would forever renounce the world. Well, she recovered, became almost well again, but not the same as before. She never will be that. So soon as she was able to obtain Martiarena's consent she made all the preparations. Signed away all her lands and possessions, and spent the days and nights in prayer and purifications. The mother superior of the Convent of Santa Teresa has been a guest at the *hacienda* this fortnight past. Only to-day the party—that is to say, Martiarena, the lady superior, and Buelna—left for Santa Teresa, and at midnight of this very night Buelna takes the veil. You know your own heart, Señor Felipe. Go your way."



"SWUNG THROUGH THE MAIN STREET . . . SILENT, SOMNOLENT, DARK."

"But not *till* midnight!" cried Felipe.

"What? I do not understand."

"She will not take the veil till midnight."

"No, not till then."

"Rafael," cried Felipe, "ask me no questions now. Only *believe* me. I always have and always will love Buelna. I swear it. I can stop this yet; only once let me reach her in time. Trust me. Ah, for this once trust me, you who have known me since I was a lad."

He held out his hand. The other for a moment hesitated, then impulsively clasped it in his own.

"*Bueno*, I trust you then. Yet I warn you not to fool me twice."

"Good," returned Felipe. "And now *adios*. Unless I bring her back with me you'll never see me again."

"But, Felipe, lad, where away now?"

"To Santa Teresa."

"You are mad. Do you fancy you can reach it before midnight?" insisted the *major domo*.

"I *will*, Rafael, I *will*."

"Then Heaven be with you."

But the old fellow's words were lost in a wild clatter of hoofs, as Felipe swung his pony around and drove home the spurs. Through the night came back a cry already faint:

"*Adios, adios*."

"*Adios*, Felipe," murmured the old man

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as he stood bewildered in the doorway, "and your good angel speed you now."

When Felipe began his ride it was already a little after nine. Could he reach Santa Teresa before midnight? The question loomed grim before him, but he answered only with the spur. Pépe was hardy, and, as Felipe well knew, of indomitable pluck. But what a task now lay before the little animal. He might do it, but oh, it was a chance!

In a quarter of a mile Pépe had settled to his stride, the dogged, even gallop that Felipe knew so well, and at half-past ten swung through the main street of Piedras Blancas—silent, somnolent, dark.

"Steady, little Pépe," said Felipe, "steady, little one. Soh, soh. There."

The little horse flung back an ear, and Felipe could feel along the lines how he felt for the bit, trying to get a grip of it to ease the strain on his mouth.

The *De Profundis* bell was sounding from the church-tower as Felipe galloped through San Anselmo, the next village, but by the time he raised the lights of Arcata it was black night in very earnest. He set his teeth. Terra Bella lay eight miles farther ahead, and here from the town-hall clock that looked down upon the plaza he would be able to know the time.

"*Hoopa, Pépe, pronto!*" he shouted.

The pony responded gallantly. His head was low; his ears in constant movement, twitched restlessly back and forth, now laid flat on his neck, now cocked to catch the rustle of the wind in the chaparral, the scurrying of a rabbit or ground-owl through the sage.

It grew darker, colder, the trade wind lapsed away. Low in the sky upon the right a pale, dim belt foretold the rising of the moon. The incessant galloping of the pony was the only sound.

The convent toward which he rode was just outside the few scattered huts in the valley of the Rio Esparto that by charity had been invested with the name of Caliente. From Piedras Blancas to Caliente between twilight and midnight! What a riding! Could he do it? Would Pépe last under him?

"Steady, little one. Steady, Pépe."

Thus he spoke again and again, measuring the miles in his mind, husbanding the little fellow's strength.

Lights! Cart lanterns? No, Terra Bella. A great dog charged out at him from a dobe, filling the night with outcry; a hayrick loomed by like a ship careening through fog; there was a smell of chickens and farmyards. Then a paved street, an open square, a solitary pedestrian dodging just in time from under Pépe's hoofs. All flashed by. The open country again, unbroken darkness again, and solitude of the fields again. Terra Bella past.

But through the confusion Felipe retained one picture, that of the moon-faced clock with hands marking the hour of ten. On again with Pépe leaping from the touch of the spur. On again up the long, shallow slope that rose for miles to form the divide that overlooked the valley of the Esparto.

"Hold there! Madman to ride thus. Mad or drunk. Only desperadoes gallop at night. Halt and speak!"

The pony had swerved barely in time, and behind him the Monterey stage lay all but ditched on the roadside, the driver fulminating oaths. But Felipe gave him but an instant's thought. Dobe huts once more abruptly ranged up on either side the roadway, staggering and dim under the night. Then a wineshop noisy with carousing *peons* darted by. Pavements again. A shop front or two. A pig snoring in the gutter, a dog howling in a yard, a cat lamenting on a rooftop. Then the smell of fields again. Then darkness again. Then the solitude of the open country. Cadenassa past.

But now the country changed. The slope grew steeper, it was the last lift of land to the divide. The road was sown with stones and scored with ruts. Pépe began to blow, once he groaned. Perforce his speed diminished. The villages were no longer so thickly spread now. The crest of the divide was wild, desolate, forsaken. Felipe again and again searched the darkness for lights, but the night was black.

Then abruptly the moon rose. By that Felipe could guess the time. His heart sank. He halted, recinched the saddle, washed the pony's mouth with brandy from his flask, then mounted and spurred on.

Another half hour went by. He could see that Pépe was in distress, his speed was by degrees slacking. Would he last? Would he last? Would the minutes that raced at his side win in that hard race?

Houses again. Plastered fronts. All dark and gray. No soul stirring. Sightless windows stared out upon emptiness. The plaza bared its desolation to the pitiless

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moonlight. Only from an unseen window a guitar hummed and tinkled. All vanished. Open country again. The solitude of the fields again, the moonlight sleeping on the vast sweep of the ranchos. Calpella past.

Felipe rose in his stirrups with a great shout. At Calpella he knew he had crossed the divide. The valley lay beneath him, and the moon was turning to silver the winding courses of the Rio Esparto, now in plain sight.

It was between Calpella and Proberta that Pépe stumbled first. Felipe pulled him up and ceased to urge him to his topmost speed. But five hundred yards farther he stumbled again. The spume-flakes he tossed from the bit were bloody. His breath came in laboring gasps.

But by now Felipe could feel the rising valley-mists, he could hear the piping of the frogs in the marshes. The ground for miles had sloped downwards. He was not far from the river, not far from Caliente, not far from the Convent of Santa Teresa and Buelna.

But the way to Caliente was roundabout, distant. If he should follow the road thither he would lose a long half-hour. By going directly across the country from where he now was, avoiding Proberta, he could save much distance and precious time. But in this case Pépe, exhausted, stumbling, weak, would have to swim the river. If he failed to do this Felipe would probably drown. If he succeeded Caliente and the convent would be close at hand.

For a moment Felipe hesitated, then suddenly made up his mind. He wheeled Pépe from the road, and calling upon his last remaining strength struck off across the country.

The sound of the river at last came to his ears.

"Now then, Pépe," he cried.

For the last time the little horse leaped to the sound of his voice. Still at a gallop Felipe cut the cinches of the heavy saddle, shook his feet clear of the stirrups, and let it fall to the ground; his coat, belt, and boots followed. Bareback, with but the headstall and bridle left upon the pony, he rode at the river.

Before he was ready for it Pépe's hoofs splashed on the banks. Then the water swirled about his fetlocks, then it wet Felipe's bare ankles. In another moment Felipe could tell by the pony's motion that his feet had left the ground and that he was swimming in the middle of the current.

He was carried down the stream over a hundred yards. Once Pépe's leg became entangled in a sunken root. Freed from that his hoofs caught in grasses and thick weeds. Felipe's knee was cut against a rock; but at length the pony touched ground. He rose out of the river trembling, gasping, and dripping. Felipe put him at the steep bank. He took it bravely, scrambled his way—almost on his knees—to the top, then stumbled badly and fell prone upon the ground.

Felipe twisted from under him as he fell and regained his feet unhurt. He ran to the brave little fellow's head.

"Up, up, my Pépe. Soh, soh."

Suddenly he paused, listening. Across the level fields there came to his ears the sound of the bell of the convent of Santa Teresa tolling for midnight.

Upon the first stroke of midnight the procession of nuns entered the nave of the church. There were some thirty in the procession. The first ranks swung censers; those in the rear carried lighted candles. The mother superior and Buelna, the latter wearing a white veil, walked together. The youngest nun followed these two, carrying upon her outspread palms the black veil.

Arrived before the altar the procession divided into halves, fifteen upon the east side of the chancel, fifteen upon the west. The organ began to drone and murmur, the censers swung and smoked, the candle flames flared and attracted the bats that lived among the rafters overhead. Buelna knelt before the mother superior. She was pale and a little thin from fasting and the seclusion of the cells. But, try as she would, she could not keep her thoughts upon the solemn office in which she was so important a figure. Other days came back to her. A little girl, gay and free once more, she romped through the hallways and kitchen of the old *hacienda* Martiarena with her playmate, the young Felipe; a young schoolgirl, she rode with him to the mission to the instruction of the *padre;* a young woman, she danced with him at the *fête* of All Saints at Monterey. Why had it not been possible that her romance should run its appointed course to a happy end? That last time she had seen him, how strangely he had deported himself. Untrue to her! Felipe! Her Fe-

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"FELIPE ARILLAGA, RAGGED, DRIPPING, . . . SPRANG TOWARD BUELNA."

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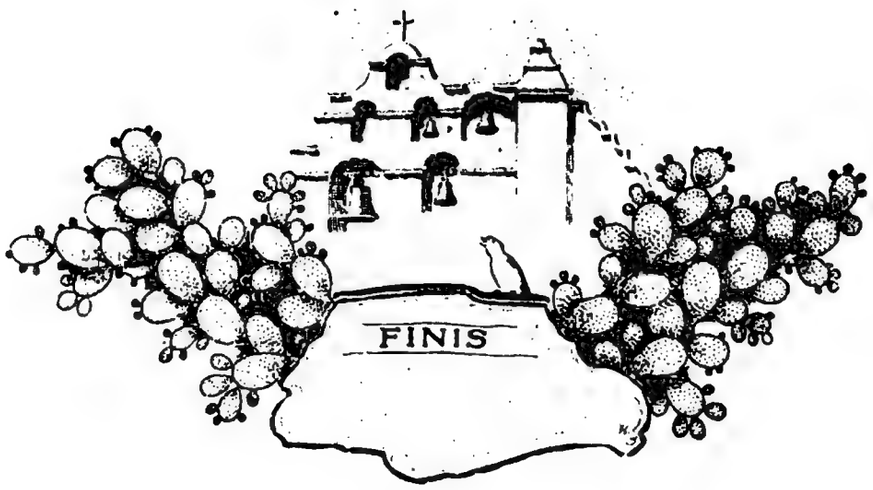
lipe, her more than brother! How vividly she recalled the day. They were returning from the Mission, where she had prayed for his safe and speedy return. Long before she had seen him she had heard the gallop of a horse's hoofs around the turn of the road. Yes, she remembered that—the gallop of a horse. Ah! how he rode—how vivid it was in her fancy. Almost she heard the rhythmic beat of the hoofs. They came nearer, nearer. Fast, furiously-fast hoofbeats. How swift he rode. Gallop, gallop—nearer, on they came. They were close by. They swept swiftly nearer, nearer. What, what was this? Gallop of a horse? No fancy. Nearer, nearer. No fancy this. Nearer, nearer. These—ah, Mother of God—are real hoofbeats. They are coming, they are at hand, they are at the door of the church, they are *here!*

She sprang up, facing around. The ceremony was interrupted. The frightened nuns were gathering about the mother superior. The organ ceased, and in the stillness that followed all could hear that furious gallop. On it came, up the hill, into the courtyard. Then a shout, hurried footsteps, the door swung in, and Felipe Arillaga, ragged, dripping, half fainting, hatless, and stained with mud, sprang toward Buelna. Forgetting all else, she ran to meet him, and, clasped in each other's arms, they kissed one another upon the lips again and again.

The bells of Santa Teresa that Felipe had heard that night on the banks of the Esparto rang for a wedding the next day.

Two days after they tolled as passing bells. A beautiful woman had been found drowned in a river not far from the house of Lopez Catala, on the high road to Monterey.



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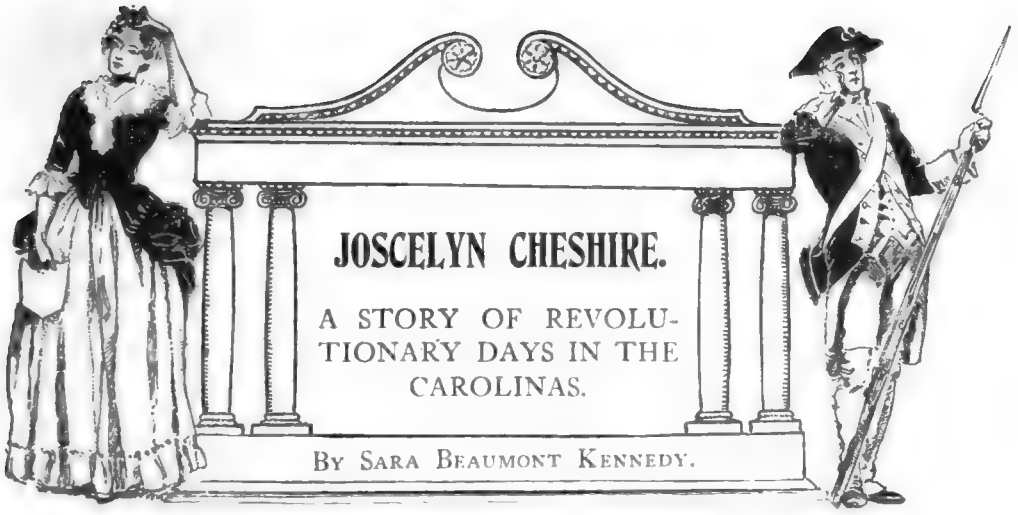

SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS.

Richard Clevering is a young Continental soldier who has donned the "buff and blue" to the admiration of a group of relatives and friends—his mother, his sister Betty, and her friends, Patience Ruffin, Dorothy Graham, and Janet Cameron. But Joscelyn Cheshire is a Tory and contemptuously snubs Richard's efforts at love-making, roundly calling him a traitor. Joscelyn's father had died just before the battle of Lexington, after which her mother moved to Hillsboro'town, to be near her brother-in-law, James Clevering, father of the young Continental who is now marching afield for the first time. Soon comes the news of James Clevering's death in a charge with Sumter; and Eustace Singleton, who, with his sister Mary, is a staunch Royalist, starts for the front, carrying with him a certain promise made by Betty Clevering.

By this time Richard had joined the American army at Valley Forge and was now sharing in all the horrors of that winter encampment, while Howe was feasting and dancing nearby in Philadelphia. One day a man named Dunn proposes to Richard that they take advantage of the *fête* and attempt to enter the city in disguise. They succeed so well that Richard, in the military rain-coat of one Barry, gains an interview with Mary Singleton's beautiful cousin Ellen, *fiancée* of Major Grant, one of Howe's *aides*. From Ellen Singleton he learns some valuable information, which he and Dunn, not without danger, carry to Lafayette, who thereupon alters his plans, recrosses the Schuylkill, and joins Washington at Valley Forge. Clinton, who has superseded Howe in command of the army at Philadelphia, is now on the march towards New York, while the Americans hang on his flank, eager to be revenged for the cruel suffering endured at Valley Forge. Then comes the fight at Monmouth, with Lee's treachery. It is Richard's first and, for some time to come, last battle; for, through his impetuous daring, he has been captured by the enemy. Among the prisoners he recognizes little Billy Bryce, of his own town, and these two plan an escape, successful in Billy's case, while Richard is still forced on towards Sandy Hook, where, in the offing, lay the British fleet ready to convey Clinton's exhausted army to New York. From one Colborn, a kindly disposed guard, Richard learns that his own destination is the dreaded prison-ship in Wallabout Bay.

Hillsboro'town, for lack of male society, has been growing dull and careless, according to Martha Strudwick, who usually gives free expression to her sentiments. Before long, however, Billy Bryce comes home and tells the story of the Monmouth victory, and his own capture and escape at the sacrifice of Richard's liberty, and delivers the latter's message to Joscelyn, who also receives, a few days later, a letter from Colborn with news of Richard's illness in the prison-ship, whereupon Joscelyn immediately sends letters through Betty Clevering to Eustace Singleton, Betty's *fiancée*, who is on Cornwallis's staff, begging him to use his influence in securing Richard's freedom. In the prison-ship the sufferings of Richard and his friend, Peter Ruffin, have become so intense that the failure of their first effort to escape merely strengthens their determination, and they form a second plot.

CHAPTER XVI.

INTO THE JAWS OF DEATH.

"Let terror strike slaves mute;
Much danger makes great hearts most resolute."—MARSTON.

"Death, when unmasked, shows us a friendly face."—GOLDSMITH.

"REBELS, turn out your dead!"

The inhuman call came down the opened hatches, and the prisoners, stupid with the foul air they had breathed all night, prepared to obey. So many times had they heard the cry that they had grown callous to its coarse brutality.

It was the end of September, and the delayed equinoctial storm would soon ravage the coast. For a week the seafaring folk had been expecting it, and now at last the great gale, or a forerunner of it, was upon them, for all night the waves had been rolling in from the outside with the sound of thunder. The ship had pitched and tossed and strained at her moorings, while the living freight in her hold prayed that she might break away entirely. The hatches, when lifted, showed no blue sky, but gray clouds and scurrying mist-wreaths. The men, com-

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ing up out of the hot and fetid air, shivered a little in the stiff breeze on the deck; then, opening their mouths, drank it in like wine. The faces of the landsmen had an added ghastliness from sea-sickness, but they were all bad enough to look upon, seamen and soldiers alike. In squads of six they took their breakfast, eating by sheer force of resolution what they loathed, that the hunger-pains might not gnaw so hard.

"How many dead this morning?" demanded the warden.

"Two, Drake and Cowles," answered Jack Bangs.

"Nay, there are three, Master Warden," said Peter Ruffin sadly. "I found Richard Clevering lying stiff and stark beside me when I got up. The bodies are there beside the capstan."

The three were stretched upon the deck. The corner of Richard's blanket, as if by accident, fell over the upper part of his face, but the mouth below was blue and drawn. The warden gave each corpse a shove with his foot, cursing the while.

"D—n 'em, had to die the worst day of the month, that the burial might be the more troublesome!" He glanced at them again, gave each another kick, and checked off their names in his book. "Here, fix these hounds up, and cut your work short so they'll be in the ground before the storm breaks."

"If you please, may I go in the boat this morning? Clevering was from my town, and I should like to pay him this last respect."

"No."

Peter knew better than to urge his plea, and so stepped quietly aside. But the warden, noticing the slow motions of one of the men to whom he had beckoned, shouted angrily: "Out of the way there, you infernal snail, or I'll fix you so you'll go in the boat and stay."

Peter sprang into the man's place. "I will be very quick," he said, touching his hat, and without another word wrapped one of the bodies quickly in its coarse covering, and took a few stitches with the needle his comrade held out. He was so deft and the lightning was so vivid that the warden grunted and let him go on. Under other circumstances he would have been put in irons for insubordination.

The stitches in Richard's blanket were few and slight, just enough to hold it about the body.

"What was the matter with that fellow? I never heard him say he was sick," said one of the sentinels, stopping to look on.

Peter's heart stood still. "He has complained for some time of a pain about the heart. All last night he tossed and rolled, and just before the hatches were opened he said to me that his time had come. He's hardly cold yet," he added hastily, as the man bent as though to touch a hand left exposed by a rent in the blanket.

"Well, he'll have time enough to get cold in the ground," the warden said, coming up behind, and mistaking Peter's words for a plea for more time before the burial. "He was a sullen chap to whom I've been looking for trouble. I'll warrant he gets not cold between this and the devil," the guard said, giving the stiff body a parting kick.

The waves were running high, but the long-boat was launched, and two of the guard took their places in it, while the man who was to assist Peter at the graves followed to receive the bodies, for the sentinels never touched them, partly through fear of contagion, and partly out of contempt. The first two were finally lowered, and then came the moment Peter had dreaded; those other two had been so stiff and stark, but he wanted no prying eyes looking on when he lifted this one; and so, before he bent over to Richard, he looked down the deck and raised his hand, quite casually it seemed, to his face. Instantly, as though he had been on the watch for a signal, Jack Bangs started a funeral hymn, loud and wailing.

"Stop that devilish howling!" roared the warden, wheeling around.

Quick as a flash Peter, signing to his assistant, lifted the prostrate figure at his feet and swung it over the side. The ropes grated on the rail, and when the warden looked again it was all over. Peter slid instantly down one of the ropes, and he and his fellow grave-digger untied the cords from the body and rolled it over beside the other two in the bottom of the boat, the guards having their hands full to keep the little craft from swamping in the waves. Then they cast off and pulled for the shore.

"What makes you look at that carrion so confoundedly straight and scared?" one of the soldiers asked Peter sharply, noticing how often his eyes went to the figure at his feet.

Peter cursed himself inwardly, but he had

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been so afraid that the blanket would rise and fall with a strong man's involuntary breathing, that he had watched it in a sort of fascination. Now he looked away, answering slowly:

"Well, you see, I have known him since he was a baby. He used to play with my little boy that died, and so I keep thinking of those days."

One of the men laughed scoutingly, but the other growled out: "Let the fool have his fling, and give me a light, Carson; my pipe's gone out in this cursed spray." And while their heads were close together Peter stretched his legs out over the body, that, if so it lost for a moment its rigidity, they might not see.

It seemed to him an hour before the shore was reached and the landing effected; then he and his assistant carried the bodies high up on the sand. Richard's went first.

"He is alive," Peter whispered as they moved up the beach; "but if so you give the faintest hint of it here or on shipboard, by word, act, or look, I'll throttle you like a viper."

"You need not threaten—I'm no peacher; and, besides, I like the lad and wish him well; but his chance is slim, and if he is taken they will torture him like the incarnate fiends."

An officer from the patrol, strolling near the boat, called out:

"How many to-day, Carson?"

"Three."

"That is a big haul; you are thinning them out fast."

"Not half fast enough; looks as if the cursed dogs hold on to life to spite us."

"Well, 'tis said that Howe will bring back plenty of recruits from the French fleet to fill your gaps."

"How is that? What is the news?"

But Peter was listening eagerly, hoping to catch some bit of outside information. The officer pointed to him with elevated eyebrows, and the guard drove him, with imprecations, to his task.

"Your shovel? Well, there it is, you son of perdition. Go on, and mind you be quick in hiding that carrion from the crows."

Beside the boat, with guns cocked and ready, the three guards then talked over the war tidings, while thirty yards up the beach the two grave-diggers fell to their task. Rapidly the first two graves were made and the occupants laid therein, with only a muttered prayer from Peter; and so were closed two human chapters in the varying story of life. The wind shrieked in from the sea, edged with foam or stinging sand caught up at the water's edge, and the heavens were like a vast slaty canopy, torn now and then by jagged lightning flashes. The scene was a fit setting for the mournful work in hand. Once or twice, while the two labored, one of the guards walked over to look at them, and then wandered back to the boat and his companions.

Over the first two graves the sand was heaped high, forming, as far as possible, a barrier for the third. Shallow that third grave was—so shallow that a man could scarce lie therein and be concealed; but so it must be that the sand might not be too heavy on the body, and yet seem to be piled up. Tenderly Peter lifted that last silent figure and stretched it in the hollow made for it; then, while he still stooped, he broke the frail stitches of the blanket, and, snatching two pieces of driftwood, put them crosswise over the head of the grave with their ends on the edges. The hollow space below might contain enough air to last a man a little while.

"Stay, here is a piece of hollow cane in the sand," said the assistant. "Keep one end of it over your mouth, Richard; we will leave the other just out of the sand; in this way you can breathe longer. So."

"Quick, quick; the shovels! The guard is returning," cried Peter.

It seemed to them that their shovels crawled, and yet they worked like mad. If the guard got there before they finished all was lost. Spadeful after spadeful! Was ever a man so hard to cover? Another step and the sentinel would be upon them, and the blanket scarcely hidden, and those tell-tale boards and the cane yet in sight. It was a fearful moment. Peter's heart stood still, and his comrade's hands were like ice.

"What the devil are you so long about?"

But it was only the angry voice that reached them; a blinding lightning flash ripped the heavens wide open, and the wind with a demoniacal shriek rushed down the beach, throwing the sand in a swirling cloud about the oncoming man, making him stagger with its force, and snatching away his hat and rain-cape. Half blinded, he raced down the sloping stretch to regain his garments, which more than once eluded him. Then in the lull he came back, swearing furi-

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ously, and, finding the men leaning on their shovels, he stuck his bayonet into each of the three mounds. Into the third it penetrated only a little way, but he did not notice, for the wind was again gathering itself for a fresh burst of fury.

"Now, then, get you to the boats," he cried, standing behind them.

Peter paused a moment and crossed himself reverently, saying in a loud voice: "Your bodies to the earth, your souls to God's care; and may you pass to liberty in the folds of the in-rolling fog."

"Pass to hell and the devil! Get on, I say!" cried the guard angrily, as he struck Peter across the shoulders with his bayonet. And Peter, having said his say, ran nimbly to the boat, and, pushing it off, they leaped in and were soon toiling amid the breakers to reach the ship's side.

It seemed to Richard that long months passed while he lay motionless under that weight of sand, breathing spasmodically through the bit of reed. The drift-boards kept the pressure partially from his chest, so that he suffered very little. The guard's bayonet had grazed his leg without piercing it, but the thirst in his throat was something terrible. Peter's voice had penetrated through the boards and their thin covering of sand, so that he knew the fog was following the wind from the sea. It was for this he had hoped, and it was this Peter meant to tell him in those last words.

By and by his limbs began to cramp and ache. Through strong will power he had kept them rigid during those terrible moments of examination and removal from the ship. He would not have dared essay the plan had he not known how superficial, through repetition, had become the warden's inspection of the corpses—just a few questions and that savage kick. Each time there had been a death during the past fortnight he had studied the details of the preparation and burial, until he was convinced that he could carry his scheme to a successful close if only Peter was allowed to be one of his sextons.

Slowly and cautiously he drew his hands up to his breast, then higher, and finally placed the palms against the board over his head. The first movement brought the sand in a shower upon his shoulders; but after a while he worked it far enough back to leave a crack between it and its fellow. This he could only feel, for, knowing the sand would strangle and blind him, he had not as yet taken the blanket from his face since moving it ever so little to receive the reed into his mouth. Next he slowly pushed the other board downward until a rush of cold air told him he was once more in the world of humanity, not forever sealed in the haunt of ghouls. Cautiously he shoved the blanket from his face and looked up into the storm-hung heavens. It was mid-afternoon, and he had thought it must be midnight.

The wind had fallen, but the waves still thundered on the shore, and the lightning now and then raced along the clouds. Afraid to raise his head, he could only lie still and stare straight above him into the square of mist and clouds. With a great throb of joy he watched the gloom deepen. He had not heard the sunset-gun from the station down the beach, but the fog would befriend him; so when he could no longer bear the straitened position he lifted his head and shoulders and looked around. The fog was everywhere; scarcely could he see the tumultuous waves that shattered themselves along the sand. He need wait no longer, no one could see him now; and painfully and carefully he finally drew his stiff limbs from under the sand. To stand at full length was not to be thought of, but he rolled over and rubbed and stretched himself until the cramp was relieved. Then he set himself to fill in and round up his vacated grave. For Peter's sake he must do this that no suspicion might be aroused when the funeral-boat brought its next cargo ashore. Swiftly he worked, using a piece of the drift-board for a shovel, and crawling from head to foot to be sure that all was right. His heart was full of gratitude when at last it was finished, and with a sigh of relief he threw the board aside and stood up straight, a free man.

But at this moment something came out of the fog from the shore side, and as he steadied himself upon his feet he stood face to face with a man.

CHAPTER XVII.

OUT OF THE SHADOW AND INTO THE SUN.

"O God, it is a fearful thing
To see the human soul take wing
In any shape, in any mood."

—Byron.

For one awful minute neither man moved; then the patrol, with the horror in his face

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"FOR A LONG MINUTE HE STOOD THERE, TREMBLING, HORROR-STRICKEN."

Joscelyn Cheshire, page 272.

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as of one who looks upon a thing of another world, gave a hoarse scream, which was swallowed up in the roar of the sea. Richard did not know what an uncanny sight he made, rising up from that grave with his hair unkempt, his face like ashes, and a burial cloth still bound about his jaws. He comprehended only that detection threatened, and detection meant death. With one bound he cleared the grave between them and grappled with the guard. Under other circumstances he would have been no match for the man, starved and weak as he was; but desperation gave him strength. It was not so much he as that aroused demon within him that gave back the patrol's blows, struck the gun from his hands, and finally gripped him about the throat. Not a word was said, not a cry was uttered as they tossed and swayed backward and forward, to the right or left, sank on one knee, and rose again to stagger and struggle. If Richard could keep that strangling hold the fight was his, and with it the liberty for which he longed; if the other man could break it, then life would pay the forfeit. Doggedly he hung on, though his fingers strained and his head reeled, while the other beat him about the face and shoulders with blows that began to lose their force, for that iron grip upon his windpipe was telling at last. Richard was literally choking the life out of him. Backward he went—backward, until the muscles in his chest swelled and the joints of his back and shoulders cracked. Still backward, with everything dark before him. Then suddenly his knees collapsed, and he went down to the sand in a shapeless huddle. But even then Richard did not let go his hold; deeper and yet deeper his fingers sank into the flesh under them, until not a quiver was left in the insensible limbs. Then finally he stood up and looked upon his work.

God! he had committed murder.

For a long minute he stood there, trembling, horror-stricken; then the self within him cried out, and he roused up to thought and action. That dead body would tell its own disastrous tale when the relief watch came; should he bury it here in his own grave? Yes, that cheated sepulchre should have its inmate; and he reached for the board. But no; there would not be time. It would take hours to hide it, trembling and weak as he was; something else must be done, something quick. Should he run for the dunes and leave it where it lay? If found thus search would be made for the slayer: he would be setting the watch upon his own track. He pressed his hands helplessly to his temples, staring meanwhile upon the horror there at his feet. Then suddenly the explanation came: the man's beat ended on a rock that dropped sharply into the water; he knew, for he had noticed when he came ashore before with the funeral-boat. If he could throw the body down there it would be thought the man had walked off in the fog and gloom; no suspicion would be aroused, and he would be free from pursuit.

Shivering at the contact, he seized the body and dragged it along over the shells and pebbles. Once or twice he lost his bearings in the short journey, but a rising wind blew out trailing lengths of fog before him, and aided thus, in a little while he reached his goal. But he could not see the body enter the water, it would be like a second murder, and so with eyes close-shut he pushed it off and groaned in his soul to hear the splash that came from below.

"God, bear witness that I did not want his blood upon my hands!"

Then he looked away to the dunes and took one step toward them. But the gun—it lay yonder by the graves. He might as well have left the body itself there. Hastily he returned, smoothed over the sand where the struggle had taken place, and, seizing the man's gun and hat, he sped again to the rock, placing them near the ledge that they might seem to have been dropped there in an attempt at self-preservation. Then he was free to go. Into the fog he plunged, making for where the sand-dunes rose, and as he tottered down into the underbrush beyond he heard the sunset gun from the station boom out through the mist. He had lived a whole lifetime in the last half hour.

It had been his plan to go directly ahead and seek some means of escaping to the Jersey coast from the island's south-side villages, but the fog hid everything, and he seemed walking in a circle. He was weak from excitement and lack of food, and, after stumbling blindly onward for a while, he turned to the left and kept on a parallel with the coast, the sound of the surf being his guide; but always he kept the sound far enough away to avoid the sentinels from the patrol. The fog had turned into a rain, cold and depressing, and so after walking

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an hour or two he was willing to risk something of danger for food and rest. He had passed several houses, but had kept aloof through fear; now, however, he bent his steps to a tiny light burning ahead.

It was a fisherman's cottage close to an inlet that jutted in from the bay, and as good fortune would have it the old man, detained by the storm, was just getting home. Even in the little harbor the swell was unusually strong, and the man was having much difficulty in beaching his boat, so that Richard's aid was most timely.

"Who are you, my friend?" the fisherman asked, when everything was snug and taut.

"A traveller who has lost his way."

The old fellow squinted his eyes for a closer look. "A traveller? Well, 'tis enough; we never ask names, my old woman and I, for in such days as these a man's name is ofttimes his most secret possession. We know not the rights of this war, and so we take no sides, but pray for the right. Now, how can I pay you for your help?"

"By giving me food and shelter."

"That will I, for without you I should have lost my whole day's take, and that had been a terrible mishap. Fry an extra fish, mother," he called into the cottage.

"Ay, two of them, good mother, I pray you, for I am as a ravening wolf, seeking what I may devour," Richard said, putting his head in at the door; and his voice was so bonny that the old woman filled the skillet with a lavish hand. And in that firelit hut he ate the first palatable meal he had had since Monmouth day. Then he set himself artfully to persuade the fisherman to take him down the Sound in his boat.

"Nay, I never go now, the journey is too much for me; and, besides, I must go to-morrow to the camp to sell my fish. But the soldiers go and come between here and New York every day; if you will come with me to the camp I will get you company."

But Richard evaded the invitation. After a while the old woman said: "There is Dame Grant who lives just over the inlet; she goes down the Sound day after to-morrow to see her people—she hath recently heard that her niece hath a new baby, a fine girl weighing ten pounds in its skin, and to be named for the dame—mayhap you could find passage with her."

But again Richard shook his head, shuddering inwardly at the thought that the old woman might recognize him, and be tempted by the standing reward for escaped prisoners to give him again into captivity. He would find some other way, he said, and talked of the fishing in the Sound. When the old man's pipe was smoked out they went to bed, and in spite of that haunting scene beside the wind-swept graves Richard slept profoundly through the night hours. Waking before the old couple in the gray morning, he crept down from the loft, and, raking together the coals upon the hearth, he breakfasted on the remains of last night's supper, then stole out into the wet and sombre world.

How sweet it was to breathe the early air and feel the earth beneath his feet, and have the weeds and underbrush rap him about the knees as he pushed away to the interior! The fisherman's hut was a league behind him when he saw the east redden with the rising sun, for the besom of the storm had swept the heavens clear. What a wonderful light threaded the woods and glorified the tree-tops, sparkling and changing with every motion of the boughs! Often he had seen it among his native Carolina hills, this opaline opening of the morn, but never before with such a thrill of appreciation, such a rush of exquisite joy.

If it had not been for that dead face playing hide and seek always among the bushes about him, he could have whistled as he walked. Now and then he sighted houses and cultivated fields, but he kept to the woods; not until he reached the sea on the other side of the island would he venture to show his face at a door. There were wild grapes in the thickets and sweet beech kernels to eat, and a little past noon he found a late melon in the weeds of a fence-corner, and feasted like a lord.

But half a mile farther on his pleasure was forgotten in a keen excitement, for from a slight eminence he saw the plain stretching to the right and left white with the tents of soldiery; and not ten paces from him a sentinel, with his back to him, sat on a fallen tree and read a letter. A few more steps, and he would have been in the hornets' nest, a helpless captive. Instantly he dropped upon his knees and crawled into the brush as stealthily as a creature of the jungle. He had evidently come too far west in his flight, for this was a part of Clinton's army quartered here within easy reach of New York. Far away

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to either side the tents reached, dotting the whole expanse of country. To turn either wing looked like an impossibility; it would take him days to skirt those picket-posts to the east; and on the west he knew from what the fisherman had said that they must reach even to the hamlet whence the boats went daily to New York. To take that route meant a sure and swift destruction, since he would be thrusting himself into the very toils he longed to avoid. His one chance seemed to be a retreat the way he came, and then to beat his way to the northeast along the coast of the Sound, and get over to the Connecticut side on some fishing-boat. He would be weeks, perhaps months, longer in reaching Washington or home, but better that a thousand times than certain capture. He reasoned it all out carefully lying under the thicket, and then lingered a few minutes to envy the unconscious sentinel his letter, for, of course, it was from home. How long it had been since he had heard aught of his loved ones —three weary months.

Downcast and disheartened he returned along his own trail, and in the early twilight heard the boom of the surf ahead of him. But he had missed his way somewhat, and came out of the brush on the side of the inlet across from the fisherman's hut. He would have to walk an extra mile or two to get back to that shelter for the night. He sighed and turned, but just at that moment there flashed upon his sight a light from a window some fifty yards down the inlet and on the same side with himself.

Stay; this was Dame Grant's cottage, and she went to-morrow to the Jersey shore to visit her kin.

He did not go back around the head of the cove, but turned instead into the field before this other cottage, whose friendly light was winking at him through the dusk. His resolution was taken for good or ill.

Evidently the dame had company, for there was the sound of voices and laughter on the water front of the cottage; and Richard stood still with a tingling sense of pleasure. It had been so long since he had heard people laugh joyously and heartily, that the sound came like the echo of something loved but almost forgotten. Between a hayrick and the fence he finally lay down to wait; and while he waited he slept, for when he awoke the cottage was silent, although the light still burned at the window. The chill of autumn was in the air, and he shivered as he crossed the enclosure and stood looking into the lighted room. It was a pleasant scene; the two boys who rowed her boat slept upon a wooden bench, but the dame sat by the table busy with a piece of bright-hued patchwork, and Richard took heart of grace that she smiled as she sewed. From his ragged boot-leg he had taken Colborn's gold piece, and now he used it to tap lightly on the small, diamond-shaped pane. The dame looked up in surprise to see a hatless man at her window; but he smiled cheerily and beckoned, holding the gold piece against the glass that she might see it. For a moment she looked at him frowningly, then the glitter of the gold won her, and she got up and opened the door.

"What want you at this hour of the night at an honest woman's house?"

"I want an honest conversation with an honest woman, therefore came I to your door, knowing where to find both. In all good faith and respect I am here; so come, good mother, ask me in. Without your bidding I will not enter, for I would not wilfully intrude upon the privacy of a lady." He bowed low, clicking his heels as neatly as though he were her partner in a minuet.

"Go along with your fine ways," she said, but she laughed.

"No ways can be too fine for a lady." And he took her hand and kissed it with the air of a prince, clicking his heels again in that military salute.

"You young impudence, leave go my hand! You'll find it heavy enough on your ear presently. I'll warrant you have it in mind to fleece me out of something, so say your say and be done with it," but there was no real anger in her voice.

"Nay, I am no highwayman nor money beggar; for that which you do for me I will pay you well," he answered, again holding up the gold piece. "But would you not be more comfortable sitting?" He waved his hand toward the chair she had quitted, and the fine courtesy of his tone again called forth her laugh; but she took the hint, and, turning, bade him enter.

"Well, where do we begin?" she asked when they were seated.

"My mother always begins by asking a stranger to have something to eat—and you have bonny blue eyes like hers," he answered, with boyish audacity pushing back her loose sleeve and patting the fat arm.

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"'Tis a good place to start," she answered, shoving him off; and would have called the boys to serve him, but he held her back.

"I wish no one but you to hear what I have to say. You may trust me—I swear it." So she opened the cupboard herself and brought out plenty of cold food. Richard ate ravenously, praising everything, for in truth it had a heavenly taste, and telling her how blue her eyes were and how pretty her patchwork—just like what his own mother used to make.

"A bit of a quilt for a bairn just born," she said, and smoothed it with her great hands.

And Richard asked the child's name, and said it had a sweet sound, and hoped it would have blue eyes with a twinkle in them like her own. And while he ate and talked she watched him narrowly. He knew it, but he did not care. Presently she said, as one asserting a fact:

"You are from one of the prison-ships."

He nodded, smiling; and his frankness evidently pleased her, for she nodded back. "That's right; no use to lie about it. I knew I had seen your face somewhere. How did you get away?"

"That is the one thing I cannot tell you, good mother, for it would implicate the man who helped me, and not even for your favor—though God knows I want it bad enough—will I betray my friend."

"Right again—hold fast to the man who holds to you; I like to see folk grateful."

Then he told her how he wanted to go in her boat to the Jersey shore, and how it was he happened to know her plans. But she shook her head; the risk was too great.

"There will be no risk at all. You are so well known to the soldiers at the different posts that you will never be questioned. It would be but natural for you to take some one stronger than your boys to help you in making so long a voyage. Find me but a coat and hat, and no one will give me a thought, for I know how to hold my tongue when occasion calls."

But still she refused. Her passport called but for three, and she was not going to run her head into a noose for all his fine speeches and petting ways—for he had squeezed her hand and patted her gray hair while he talked.

He would not listen to her refusal. If she did not take him he was lost. And he got hold of her other hand, and in pathetic words described to her the agony he had suffered on the vessel; and then he dropped his head on the table and almost sobbed as he told her of Joscelyn and his yearning to see her.

"Oho, a sweetheart, is it?" asked the old woman with aroused interest.

"Yes, as bonny a girl as you ever set eyes upon. And think you, good dame, of your own young days, of the time when the lads were at your beck and call—for I warrant me those blue eyes broke many hearts—would you not have been grateful if some one had saved your lover for you?"

The dame chuckled. "Ay, ay, I had my fling with the lads, I did."

"It goes without the saying. And there was one among them you loved?" The brown face grew suddenly very tender as with the shadow of a memory. "Then for the sake of him save Joscelyn's sweetheart for her."

But still she shook her head, and for a minute Richard was in despair. Then he began all over again, adding the gold piece to his argument. Thus for half an hour the plea went on, and just as he felt that he had failed she suddenly nodded her head decisively, that softened light again shining in her face.

"One of the boys shall bide at home and you may go in his stead, since you are so set on it; but mind, you help with the boat, and I have the gold."

"That and Joscelyn's love shall be yours, you dear, bonny dame!" he cried rapturously, seizing her about the shoulders and kissing her heartily on either red cheek.

"Get out! Of all the lads I ever saw you have the freest manners." But the shove she gave him had in it no roughness. He had set her to thinking of her own youth and of a lad who had gone to sea one morning, kissing his hand to her, but had never come home again, though she had waited for him for many a day through shine of sun and wail of storm. Through all her life a woman's first love is a touchstone to her sympathy, the open sesame to her tenderness; neither as maid, nor yet as wife does she ever quite forget that first sweet spell upon her heart. Dame Grant scarcely saw the man beside her, but for sake of that other lad, whom nobody had been able to help back in the years that were dead, she would save this other girl's lover.

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In an hour their preparations were made. From the loft above the dame brought down a leather jerkin and a battered hat, and after her scissors had gone over Richard's head, he was metamorphosed so that even she herself would scarcely have recognized him.

"You'd be a fine figure of a man if those wretches on the ship had not starved the shape out of you."

"My mother always said that in the way of beauty Providence had done more for my legs than for my face," Richard laughed.

"Well, the warden hath undone the job, for thy breeches hang like a scarecrow's. Now up into the loft with you and find some straw whereon to sleep. 'Tis close upon midnight, and we start with the sun."

But Richard was too full of joy and excitement to sleep much, and so when the dame and her boys came out the next morning they found him sitting beside the boat pulling on his boots after a plunge into the salt water. The feeling in his breast was indescribable when at last, after many injunctions to the boy who was left, they drew out of the cove into the open bay, in the pearl and purple morning, and he knew his journey was begun.

They went somewhat out of their way that Dame Grant might leave some parcels at the patrol station, their course taking them within a hundred yards of the three prison-ships rocking in the bay. At first Richard turned his eyes away with a sickening sense of pain and rage; then looked eagerly to see if he might recognize Peter on the deck. Dear Peter, how he wished he had come too! Yes, there he was near the stern; Richard knew him from his height and from the wide hat he wore, and he had to hold his teeth clinched to keep from crying out to him. How dismal and condemned the three hulks looked despite the transfiguring touch of the morning! How had he ever lived there for three months? And over there on the strand was his grave, the spot to which his mother's thoughts would make many a sorrowful pilgrimage, if so the news of his death should outrun him to the Carolina hills.

At the station one of the guards remarked on the fact that the dame had a new hand aboard.

"Yes; Henry's stomach's apt to go back on him in rough weather, and at this season o' the year we are like to get into a blow any time, so I left him and brought a stronger man. It turns my blood to see Henry heaving and gagging when he ought to be shortening sail."

"Well, yon fellow hasn't much the look of a sailor," said the man, eying Richard suspiciously as he was making awkward attempts to pull in a flapping sail.

"Oh, he isn't showing off, but he suits me well enough," the dame answered, with a warning side look at Richard, who instantly gave better heed to his task. Nothing but her coolness saved him, for the guard's words, coming so suddenly, had made him go very white.

Then a pæan of praise went singing itself through his heart, for the parcels were delivered, and, pushing off from shore, the boat sailed out of the bay and turned her nose to the west. Down the narrow water-way that runs between Long Island and the city of New York they sailed all the morning, stopping here and there at signals from patrol stations to show their passports. But at none of these places were they detained for very long, for Dame Grant had looked carefully to such matters, and so noon found them in the wide bay to the south of the city. No misfortune had befallen Richard, for he had kept a still tongue at every stopping-place; but he had used his eyes and ears, and thus gained some idea of the strength and position of the enemy along the island; and now he was busy counting the war vessels in the harbor of the city. What a beautiful sight they made with their rigging and yards strung with flashing colors. In the afternoon the breeze quickened, and they went racing away before it toward the ever-growing shore-line ahead, and in the gloaming they landed at a little hamlet on the Jersey side of the bay.

High up on the beach the boat was pulled and tied to a stake, and then, while the boy was gaping about him, Richard went back to the boat-side, and, putting his strong, young arms about the dame, he kissed her impulsively full on the mouth.

"You have kept your contract, and the gold is yours; God bless you for a good, true woman," he said, slipping the coin into her hand.

But she thrust it back vigorously. "Nay, I will none of it; I but put it in the bargain to test you. You have paid me twofold by your labor and your good gratitude. Tell

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your Joscelyn that I send you to her and bid her use you well."

Nothing could prevail upon her to touch the coin, and so at last Richard turned away.

"Hist!" she said, holding him a moment, "'tis said there is a Continental force near Brunswick; keep to the southwest."

"Thank you, and God keep you." And the gathering shadows swallowed him up.

At that very moment, on board the prisonship "Good Hope," Eustace Singleton was listening to the story of Richard's death from the obsequious warden, and wondering how he was to write it to Betty.

CHAPTER XVIII.

"KISS ME QUICK AND LET ME GO."

It was a winey day in November, one of those rare days when summer, repenting of her desertion, steals softly back to comfort the earth with a parting smile. Out in the brown fields the birds pruned their wings in the sun and sang a few notes softly, as a singer who recalls fitfully and doubtfully a long-forgotten tune; the golden daisies by the door-sill burned like stars late fallen from the far firmament; a revivified butterfly hovered languidly over the faded aster-beds, and venturesome wasps sallied from their castles under the eaves and buzzed droningly against the window-panes. It was a day of shifting shadows, of subtle changes, and soft surprises.

Joscelyn and Betty sat over their embroidery-frames in the latter's parlor, talking of the events of the past two months —the long wait between their letter to Eustace and his sorrowful reply; the grief that clouded the two houses for four days before they knew that Richard had escaped and was not dead, and the intense relief and joy his short message had brought them.

"It was like a hundred candles suddenly brought into a dark room," Betty said, snipping off her thread. "But do you know, Joscelyn, that you acted so queerly, scolding because you had cried so much, and cocking your head before the mirror to count the wrinkles your grieving had made —though for the life of me I could never see one of them—that at one time I half believed you were angry that Richard had not died in truth."

"You give me credit for much feeling, I am sure," quizzed Joscelyn. "But in sooth, Betty, when a woman gets circles under her eyes, and crow's feet at the corners of her mouth, and a dismal whine to her voice through overmuch sighing, she likes to know it has not been all in vain. Wasted grief is like wasted sweets—useless."

"I would to heaven all grief were useless and in vain."

Joscelyn shook her head. "That would not do, for without grief there would be no pity, and without pity there would be no love, and life without love were not worth the living."

"Love? What do you know of love?" Betty asked, looking up quickly.

"You vain little minx, do you think Cupid wasted all his arrows on you and Eustace?"

"N—o; but, Joscelyn——"

"'But, Joscelyn,'" mimicked the other, still laughing. "From the doubt in your voice one would think you were own daughter to that biblical Thomas whose belief was so small. Trust me, Cupid has saved a shaft in his quiver for me. But when I am hit I do not believe I shall go moping and blushing like—like some folk I know."

"You are such a queer girl, Joscelyn; one never knows how to take you. You sorrowed for Richard so vehemently at first —do you—can you mean that you care just a little for him?"

"My dear, I was much more in love with Richard dead than I am ever like to be with Richard alive. You see death is not unlike charity—it covers a multitude of faults."

"You heartless creature!"

And Betty got up and took her frame to another window. But she could never stay angry long, partly because of her gentle disposition, and partly because she knew that much of Joscelyn's seeming heartlessness was in truth but mischievous banter; and so their heads were close together again very soon, while their needles wrought silken poppies or blue-eyed violets into the meshes of canvas on their frames.

And while they thus talked and sewed a horseman came galloping down the street. A great commotion followed in his wake, for he rode with a free rein, and so rapidly withal that his horse's hoofs struck sparks from the stones of the street. Straight to Mistress Clevering's door he went, and springing down stayed not to knock or parley, but

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entering without ceremony, and meeting the astonished lady in the hall, hugged her with a will.

"Why—it is—Richard—Richard!"

Her voice was half choked with giving back his kisses, but it reached the two girls in the parlor, who, startled at first into silence, threw down their needles and rushed headlong into the hall, and, before they realized it, were kissed by the newcomer in a rapturous greeting.

Joscelyn's cheek burned scarlet under his lips, but so glad was she to see him safe after all their anxiety, that she submitted without protest. In faith, it was over so quickly there had been no time for resistance. Devouring her with his eyes, he tried to retain her hand when the greeting was over, but after a moment she slipped it, not unkindly, from his grasp, and presently, when he had told them briefly of his marvellous escape, she ran over to give her mother the news and to see if there was not a piece of his favorite cake in the cupboard. A warm tingle was in her veins, and she put her hand up to the cheek he had kissed. How pleasant it was to hear his voice in the house. If he would only leave the war alone and—and quit making love to her, she would be so fond of him. They used to be excellent comrades before these two things came between them. But—what an impetuous way he had of kissing a girl!

Thinking thus she put a napkin over the cake, and turned to leave the pantry; but Richard, under pretext of speaking to her mother, had followed her, and now stood in the door barring her exit.

"Joscelyn, how good it is to see you again! Have you thought of me?"

"'Twould have been impossible not to think of you, with nothing else being talked of in the house these two months past."

"But have you missed me?"

"Why, we miss anything to which we have been accustomed."

"And you sorrowed for me?"

"Truly, Richard, I should be a most hard-hearted girl not to sorrow over such suffering as has been yours."

"God bless you!" He was so full of joy over the meeting that he did not notice the lack of love-warmth in her voice, but when he would have put his arm about her, she pushed him off with quiet decision.

"Nay, Richard, do not begin that. You told your mother just now that you had but three hours to stay with us; let us not waste a single moment of the time in a useless love-making."

"But you kissed me for greeting."

"Nay, sir, 'twas you kissed me," she said, with a shimmer of laughter over her face like sunlight upon dancing water.

"Listen, sweetheart," he said, coming very close to her, his head almost swimming with the soft intoxication of her presence; "we may have but these few minutes together, but I want you to know that it was the thought of you that kept me alive in that vile prison and finally nerved me to escape. But for you—for the fierce longing to see you, to touch you—I should have stayed there and died like a rat."

"Eustace did all he could," she broke in; "but our letter was long in reaching him, for General Clinton had sent him to help repel the attack on Rhode Island, and he did not return to New York for more than a month."

"I know, and some day I shall thank him; but he could not have effected my release or exchange, only bought a little favor from my hard jailers, and I cared not for that kind of obligation from one of his name. It was you—the memory of your dear face that steeled my nerves and broke my bonds. There is a species of numbing despair that comes upon a man sometimes over which a great love alone can triumph."

She put her hand upon his arm, for there was a pathos in his voice that touched her deeply. "Richard, I wish I loved you."

"And so you shall, and do," he cried; and instantly the tender spell upon her was broken, for in his tone and manner was the old arrogance and sureness that she so much resented. He felt the change, and said pleadingly: "The fisherwoman who rescued me said at parting: 'Tell your Joscelyn to use you well.' Are you so soon going back on her injunction?"

"Nay; she was a good woman, and I shall pray for her."

"Love me instead. 'Twill be truer gratitude."

But his mother and Mistress Cheshire were in the hall calling to him, and so Joscelyn, for answer, pushed him through the door; and he went out to the older women, munching a bit of sweet cake like a boy.

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By this time the neighbors were all collected about the door, eager to hear of absent sons and husbands; and he went out to them and answered questions and took messages, and told anew the story of his escape, but with such omissions as to throw no suspicion on Dame Grant if so the story found its way back to the north.

"And in writing to Peter," he said to Patience and her mother, who were grief-stricken at his story, "say only that Dick Clevering told you where he was; he will understand, and anything else might arouse the warden's suspicions and bring punishment upon him. And what I say to Mistress Ruffin I say to you all; write nothing that would expose our poor fellows to question and its dire consequences."

He thought they would never have done with their inquiries and their bemoanings, so short was his time and so eager was he for one more word with Joscelyn. At last he said:

"And now, my friends, I will carry as many letters as my pockets can hold, but they must be writ in short shift, for in an hour I go on my journey, and shall not return this way when once I set my face northward."

And so they went away, some to prepare their missives, others out of delicacy, feeling his own people must have him to themselves.

"Tell us all about your journey's purpose, Richard," said Betty.

"No, sister; a soldier's mission is not his to tell. Suffice it for you to know that another man, Dunn by name, and I go through the Carolinas, perhaps so far south as Savannah, on business for the commander-in-chief. He cannot weaken his present force by detaching any number of men to aid the southerners, but he wants to put them on their guard against the force Clinton is sending by sea from New York; and also to learn accurately the strength of the cause in these parts."

"And where is Master Dunn?"

"He stopped for a few hours over the Virginia line to see his wife, and I rode the livelong night that I might have this glimpse of you. Methinks I should almost have deserted to come back for a look at you all had I not persuaded Dunn to choose me on this expedition."

"And where are you to meet him?"

"At Charlotte three days hence."

"When Eustace—when Master Singleton," Betty corrected herself with a vivid blush, "wrote saying you were dead, mother and I were like to go crazy with grief. He wrote it kindly, but for two days mother did not leave her bed."

"And what did Joscelyn say?"

"Oh, Joscelyn cried till her eyes were all red and puffed, and reminded us how you and she used to ride and read and walk together, without even so much as a sharp word, until the war-talk came on. She did much to comfort mother."

"God bless her! But you were not long in suspense?"

"No; but mother had already prepared to have a service in your memory, and Janet and Patience had practised the hymns."

"Well, there was at least a grave to sing over," laughed Richard; but his mother was crying even to think of those sad hours.

"How thin you are," she said, feeling his arms tenderly.

"Well, mother, when a man has been in his grave 'tis not to be expected that he will look like one of the fatted kine. But I am plump as a rosy Cupid compared with what I have been; and this reminds me that I am hungry for some of your good cooking. Do you and Betty get me up a bit of dinner while I look to my horse."

But he knew his horse had been cared for, and instead of the stable it was Joscelyn's door he sought.

"I have but a little while left," he said; "come and sit with us that I may not lose sight of you for one of those blessed minutes. I am as a thirsty man with the cup held ever out of his reach."

"I thought you would wish to talk with your mother and sister alone."

"There is nothing I tell them that I would not quite as willingly trust to you, for though you are a Loyalist, yet are you loyal to your friends," he said, smiling at his own pleasantry, and she laughed too. Long afterwards those words came back to him with a pang.

As they crossed the street Mistress Strudwick hailed them from the sidewalk. "Hey, there, Richard, you are keeping bad company, and will fall under suspicion consorting with that young Tory," she cried. "Are your despatches in the pocket next to her? If so, beware."

"I have them in my heart, Mistress Strudwick."

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"Then in faith are they already Joscelyn's," laughed the old lady, teasingly pinching the girl's cheek as the two came up to her.

"Come, Mistress Strudwick, Richard wears not his heart on his sleeve."

"No, but he pins it instead upon yours—which is quite as public. Ah, Richard, she is a sad daredevil!" And while she went on to tell him of some of the scenes of the past months, his face showed rapid changes from consternation to anger. He had feared for her from the first, and in his mother's parlor he caught her arm almost fiercely:

"Are you mad that you jeopardize yourself in this way?"

"Mistress Strudwick is over-alarmed; I can take care of myself," she answered a trifle hotly.

But he was not satisfied; one word brought on another, and they were nearly quarrelling when Betty came to say his dinner was ready.

"Joscelyn," he whispered with a sudden softening of manner as they went down the hall, and he took her hand and laid in it a shining gold piece, "this is all the gold I have in the world. It was to have paid the price of my flight, but the fisherwoman would not have it. Keep it for me till the war is done—I have a special purpose for it."

After dinner the neighbors came with their letters and farewells, and he had no further talk alone with Joscelyn. She bade him a very gentle good-by, however, and ran across to her own balcony opposite while he comforted his mother and Betty, and said farewell to the assembled friends. When he was mounted and had waved them a last adieu, he made his horse curvet as though loath to start, and so brought up close to the rail of the opposite balcony.

"Joscelyn, keep the gold piece safe and in some hallowed place, for when the war is done it shall be made into our wedding ring—'tis for that I saved it. Good-by, sweetheart."

And then he was gone as he had come, with a free rein and a ringing hoof-beat; and the crowd behind broke into small groups to discuss the news he had brought, while the girl leaning on the veranda across the way turned a shining coin in her hand, looking at it pensively, with a curious light in her eyes.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE WEARING OF A RED ROSE.

"She gives thee a garland woven fair,
Take care!
It is a fool's-cap for thee to wear,
Beware! Beware!
Trust her not,
She's fooling thee!"

—LONGFELLOW.

THE winter was a quiet one in Hillsboro'. Joscelyn sewed at the flaming poppies of her embroidery during the mornings; rode with Betty or Mary Singleton over the commons in the afternoons when the snow was not too deep, and in the evenings played cribbage with her mother or sang to the sound of her spinet in the firelighted parlor. Now and then news of the outside strife came over the mountains, or out of the far reaches to the north and east, but the red wave of war spent itself before it reached the inland town. Washington was jealously watching the British in New York, and in the south the fate of Charleston was rapidly being sealed, while now and then a soldier, coming home on furlough or sick leave, brought tidings of the partisan warfare ceaselessly waged through the Carolinas and Georgia by Sumter and Marion and other bold leaders; but Hillsboro', upon the Eno, dozed through the long winter months.

"This war is worse than tiresome, it's perfectly hateful," Janet Cameron said, twisting her yellow curls about her fingers and pouting disconsolately; "it is making old maids of us whether the men wish it or not. Here I am eighteen this coming Whitsuntide, and not a genuine suitor have I had."

"Fie, Janet! Where is Billy Bryce?" asked Joscelyn, in whose room the two sat

"That baby?" with a scornful accent.

"You did not used to think him such a baby."

"Perchance not, for he is a whole four months older than I, and that is a mighty age!"

"What manner of lover do you want now?"

"Oh, a grown man—a big strong fellow with a will of his own, who never asks for a kiss, but just takes it."

"You little minx, what know you of kissing men-folk?"

"Nothing—that is just it——"

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"Janet!"

"—for when Billy blushes like a peony, and politely and decorously asks me to kiss him, I am in duty bound to look shocked and blush back and say no; nothing else would satisfy my dignity, though I could pinch him for it! That is why I call him a baby," stoutly maintained the girl, her lips curling and her voice full of mockery.

"He does not wish to forget his manners."

"To say always 'if you please' for tender favors is not the manner for a lover."

"Since you are so wise, tell me what sort of manners a lover should have."

"Oh, you know without the telling! He ought to be headstrong and masterful, and a—a bold, bad robber when it comes to claiming sweets from his lady's lips."

"Well, when Billy comes from the war I shall give him a hint as to how to mend his behavior."

"An you did, I should hate you. Why, he does not even know how to write to a girl. Here is a letter from him in which he sends his duty to his mother. Did you ever hear of such idiocy? A love-letter with a message like that! A love-letter should be private and confidential, filled full of such sweetness that one pair of eyes alone should read it; and he sends his duty to his mother, forsooth! Why, that prying old creature would want to read every line written here if I gave her the message—and heaven knows she might, and be none the wiser, for all of sentiment there is in it is this last sentence: 'I would send you my love, an I dared; but I would not for the world make you angry or hurt your maidenly modesty.' Now that is a love-letter for you!"

"Well, it is not deliriously passionate," admitted Joscelyn.

"It is deliriously idiotic. I'd just have him understand that my modesty is not quite so thin-skinned as he imagines."

Joscelyn fell back in her chair shrieking with laughter, while the yellow-headed tempest before the glass shook her curls and emphasized her words with a scouting gesture. "Why, Joscelyn, if I were that boy's great-grandmother he could not treat me with more deferential respect."

"I think it is beautiful in him."

"Beautiful! Well, I think it is *imbecile!* Hurt my maidenly modesty, indeed! One would think my modesty were a sore toe to be stubbed or trod upon. Stop laughing, Joscelyn Cheshire; you are as stupid as Billy." And when Joscelyn answered with another silvery peal, Janet, in high indignation, flung out of the room and down the steps, her heels clattering as she went; and the next morning her maid carried the offending letter to Mistress Bryce with a sweetly worded note, saying Billy had, no doubt, made a mistake in the address of his missive. And Billy swore his first oath when he heard of it.

Nor was Janet the only one who came to confessional in Joscelyn's room. It was there that Betty found the only outlet for her secret joy. In spite of the war and its sad consequences, the year had been such a happy one—the sweetest year she had ever known, for it had been full of dreams and fancies, of thrills and hopes. Even the self-reproach, with which she sometimes tormented herself because of her mother, had in it a touch of sweetness, since it was linked with her love. The whole world was as a new place; the winter snows held an unthought-of revelation of beauty, and each flower that budded to the spring sunshine was a fresh creation bearing on its unwritten petals a message of love. She would not write to Eustace, for that would be undutiful to her mother, but Joscelyn's letters were filled with tender messages for her, with now and then a little wafered note that burned her fingers with a delicious sense of forbidden fruit, and which she read and reread in the privacy of her white-curtained room, trembling and flushing at the love they told.

But as the spring advanced a shadow crept over her happiness, a film like the impalpable dust that gathers on a fine picture hanging always in the light. Eustace had ceased to write. Two months had gone by, and no word had come from him. A strange, new fear was tugging at Betty's heart.

"Naught of evil has befallen him or Mary would know; and you said they had no tidings?" she asked wistfully one evening, as she leaned against Joscelyn's window and watched the pale-petalled stars blossom through the purple gloaming.

"I rode all the way to the Singletons' yesterday afternoon on purpose to ask, and they know nothing."

"And his mother feels no uneasiness?"

"None. She says Lord Cornwallis would

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immediately inform her if he should be killed."

Betty heaved a deep sigh; and then that latent fear came out: "I suppose he finds the ladies of the city so beautiful and entertaining that he has forgotten his—his friends here."

"S—o! that is what makes you so long of face these days? Well, I do not believe a word of it. Eustace is fond of his friends; and, above all," she added, taking the girl's hand in hers, "he is no jilt. You will find that you at least are remembered, and that his silence is from reasonable cause."

"His cousin, Ellen Singleton, is such a beautiful woman—you remember Richard told us of her in his letter about the Philadelphia *fête*. Like Mary, he said, only more lovely. They must of necessity be much together, for she, too, is in New York."

"And betrothed to Major Grant, you jealous child."

"But that need really make no difference so far as Eustace's admiration goes. Besides, there must be others as beautiful."

"Of course; but you are pretty, too, when your face is not long and your eyes red with weeping."

Betty went home comforted; and that night when her mother made some sharp remark about the Singleton family, she plucked up courage to say it was scarcely fair to judge the whole family adversely because of the father's shortcomings. And then, scared at her own temerity, she ran away to her room and cried out her trouble to that insensate and inanimate confessor of wronged or sorrowing womanhood, her pillow.

A week later Joscelyn, coming from the Singletons', tied a red ribbon on her shutter as a sign that she had news; and Betty, hastening over, soon learned of Clinton's long and tempestuous voyage from New York to Charleston, whither he went to subdue that city. Eustace had been badly hurt in the storm that wrecked so many of the transports, and had been laid up in the hospital at Tybee Bay for weeks while Clinton went on to Charleston to begin the siege.

So the British had come again to the South to teach the people of that section their duty to their king, and the quiet that had reigned at Hillsboro' was broken by the coming and going of recruiting parties, and by the vacillating reports of victory or failure from the beleaguered city.

But it was not until August that the climax came. Then Gates, smarting with the defeat at Camden, halted the remnant of his flying army, scarcely a thousand strong, at the town on the Eno, to rest and sum up the full measure of the disaster that had befallen him. During the short time that he remained the town was in a ferment. The way to the camp was thronged with sympathizers; kitchen chimneys smoked with the extra cooking, and in every house was a banquet of the best that could be had. Only in the Cheshire house was there no preparation, nor upon the door was there the blue-and-buff cockade that marked the others. There were not lacking those who called official attention to this fact, and so many comments and criticisms crept about among the soldiers, that a couple of young officers, bent on a frolic, and thinking to teach this wilful Joscelyn a needed lesson, stopped upon her porch and sent word that they would speak with her. And presently she came down to them, dressed fit to dance in a queen's minuet in silver brocade over a scarlet petticoat; the round whiteness of her neck and arms shining through foamy lace, a red rose in her powdered hair, and a black patch near the corner of her mouth giving a saucy emphasis to her lips. As she stepped out of the door the young fellows, who had been lounging on the porch-rail, instantly sprang up and uncovered at sight of so much beauty and dignity. They had thought to find a country maid, mayhap a woman past her youth; and instead this glowing creature stood before them.

"What is your pleasure, gentlemen?" she asked, but the stiff courtesy of her question was belied by the laugh in her eyes.

They exchanged uneasy glances, and one took a step toward the porch exit; but the other, who was to be spokesman, summoning up resolution, stammered and answered:

"We found no cockade of the nation's colors on your door, and did but stop to ask the reason."

"Your general sent you?"

"No, no; we were but passing and came of our own accord."

"Oh, a friendly visit, with no official significance? I pray you present each other," and she courtesied at each name. "And now let us go into the parlor and see what can be done for your entertainment."

And in the parlor she gave them the best chairs, and set herself with much graciousness of manner to entertain them, plying

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them with delicate compliments, singing her Tory ballads with such laughing abandon that, in the same spirit of fun, they applauded her, thinking not a moment of the songs, but of the singer. Later on she brewed them a cup of tea, telling them it was a love-potion to win a fair one's favor; and although they began by protesting vehemently, yet they ended by drinking it, for she first put her own lips to the cups, and then dared them with her eyes to refuse. After that they would scarcely have hesitated at hemlock. At the end of an hour she dismissed them, each with a red rose in his coat.

"The color suits your handsome eyes," she said softly to one, with a ravishing glance, as she fastened the flower in place. And to the other she murmured, with downcast lids and a sweet similitude of faltering: "This is for memory," as though for them both this hour was to be a tryst for thought and tender recollection, and the rose its symbol.

Neither of them had the wish nor the will to tear the flower away; and so with a certain crestfallen exhilaration they took their leave, riding slowly down the street, swearing each other to silence. But the story got the rounds within the hour, for Mistress Strudwick, seeing them enter the house, and fearing some danger or annoyance to Joscelyn, had followed quickly, and sat in the next room with the door ajar during the entire interview. And she was not slow in publishing it abroad, so that the young officers were twitted unmercifully at mess and headquarters; even General Gates, when told of it, forgot for a moment the humiliation of his late defeat and laughed long and loud. Under the banter one of the men threw his rose away; but the other held stoutly to his, meeting the raillery with the assertion that it was a lady's favor and not a king's color that he wore.

"It was not kindly of you to take such mean advantage of them, Joscelyn, seeing how irresistible you can make yourself, but it was just the cleverest thing you ever did," Janet cried, squeezing Joscelyn's waist. "Mistress Strudwick has near had apoplexy with laughter, and even Mistress Bryce—who hates you like a double dose of senna, and was the first to call attention to your undecorated door—could not keep a straight face to hear how neatly you outwitted the young coxcombs. But really, my dear, you deserve no great credit for it, for in that gown you are fit to melt harder hearts than Providence gave our gallant young soldiers."

"I do not flatter myself their hearts were touched; it was only their vanity that melted like wax in the flame of my flattery."

"Well, they deserved what they got—trying to teach you behavior, indeed!"

The next day the army, refreshed and rested, took up its line of march, passing directly in front of the Cheshire homestead. On the veranda, in her brocade and brilliant petticoat, and framed by the riotous rose vine, Joscelyn sat and made pretence to be very busy with her flax-wheel; but from under her drooping lids she saw the whole procession.

Beside his company rode a young lieutenant, his eager gaze ahead of him until he reached the undecorated house; then his hat came off, and, lifting his lapel on which hung a faded red rose, he cried up to the girl on the balcony:

"This is for memory!"

And Joscelyn laughed and fluttered her white handkerchief with what might or might not be the suggestion of a kiss. And he, forgetful of military decorum, turned in his saddle and kept his gaze upon her until the troop passed beyond the corner.

(*To be continued.*)

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Photograph by "Rockwood."

HON. BIRD S. COLER,
Comptroller of the City of New York.

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THE GOVERNMENT OF A GREAT CITY.

By Bird S. Coler,
Comptroller of the City of New York.

The statement is often made that no American city can boast of the character or efficiency of its government. State governments are economical and progressive, some of them; the affairs of towns and villages are conducted in a manner satisfactory to their inhabitants; but whenever an urban community rises to the magnitude of a city, there develops quickly such conflict of interests and purposes that the management of public affairs too often falls into methods that are corrupt, wasteful, or incompetent. Apparently the real cause of this unfortunate condition is the fact that the opportunities for the acquisition of wealth, the intensity of the struggle for advancement enforced by the closeness of contact and competition in cities, develop human greed and selfishness, and lower the standard of citizenship. A contributing cause is the growth of that spirit of general indifference to everything that is not the personal concern of the individual citizen. The larger and more compact the city, the smaller that public spirit without which there can be no concert of action for the common good.

A city is a corporation in which the inhabitants undertake to preserve and develop certain public necessities and utilities for the general welfare. The management of the business involves no serious complications and few experiments. Municipal government, however, cannot be conducted on the same lines as the business of a private corporation. The sole aim of the latter is to make money for the stockholders. The purpose of the former is to make a city a better place in which to live, and the only dividends possible are improved public utilities and better citizenship.

The crippling curse of American municipal government is political meddling and State interference. Every city is, in one sense, the creature of a State, because it must have a charter, a corporate existence which must come from the larger division of government. It seems to be a fixed policy of our politics that what a State creates it can cripple, rob, or destroy with impunity. More than half the bad city government in this country is traceable directly to vicious or unnecessary legislation. When one political party or faction is in power in a great municipality, and another in power in the State, the city becomes the battleground of conflicting political interests, and corrupt or incompetent government invariably results.

It is difficult, perhaps impossible, to provide a safe and effective constitutional method to prevent State legislatures from interfering in the local affairs of cities; but public opinion and political sagacity can be, and should be, developed to the point where they can guarantee home rule. Charters should be carefully and intelligently drawn or amended to fit the geographical, commercial, and financial conditions of a city, and then they ought to have a fair trial before they are marred or partially nullified by special legislation. They should provide a broad, liberal, and secure framework for the development of progressive and honest local government, then good citizenship and public spirit must do the rest.

The first principle advocated by a majority of those who seek to improve city government is that it must be non-partisan. The principle is a good one, but it is not absolutely essential, and in practice rarely results in permanent benefit to a city or the non-partisan element, because such administrations, having no cohesive responsibility, disintegrate into minor factions and never secure a second term. A great majority of the American voters have been trained in the school of practical and partisan politics, and it will be years before they can entirely disassociate any form or part of government from partisanship. It will be a shorter and easier task to improve the standard of politics in cities than to banish parties from municipal affairs. There is an appearance of direct responsibility in government by parties, which seems to appeal to the spirit of democracy in America, and that spirit is quite as strong in urban as it is in rural communities.

The first and most important step towards the proper government of cities is centrali-

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zation of power and responsibility, and a complete understanding on both sides that the officers are the employees or trustees of the people as a whole. The experiment of divided authority and the excessive division and subdivision of duties has never produced satisfactory results. For purposes of administration there should never be more than two elective officers of a municipality, the chief executive and the chief financial officer. The mayor should have unlimited power in all executive matters, and his authority to appoint and remove all subordinates should not be restricted. The chief financial officer ought to have final veto power over all expenditures, and complete responsibility for the financial affairs of the city, including the assessment of property and the collection of taxes.

Every unnecessary division of duty or authority leads to the creation of many useless offices, wasteful expenditures, and a general shirking of labor and responsibility. Charters should be specific and mandatory in providing complete simplicity in the transaction of all public business. There must be few departments and no unnecessary bureaus. The first fruits of legislative or political meddling in local government are sinecures and confusion in the transaction of the public business. Government is for the benefit and convenience of the taxpayer and citizen, and that interpretation of it should regulate the public service. Charters and legislation ought to leave to the local authorities the fixing of salaries of all employees, the regulation of public work and contracts. A great city like New York is entitled to the best service in every department, and the best professional skill and experience when required, and must pay full value for the same; but an arbitrary salary-schedule, fixed by a State legislature, incites contempt and defiance of local authority.

The question of labor and pay in municipal service has become an urgent and important one in many American cities. The general trend of recent legislation, State and local, has been in the direction of liberality in public employment. In many cases indiscriminate high wages have been provided, and a reaction is now setting in. This reaction is developing along two divergent and dangerous lines. One, if allowed, will lead to false economy, the other to the worst form of paternalism in government. Many leaders of the so-called theory of business methods in city government insist that every municipality should have the right to employ labor in the open market, at the lowest rate. While there is some argument in favor of this system, there is more to be said in behalf of a policy of generous payment for first-class service. There is no reasonable defence, however, of that form of paternalism that would provide extravagant pay for all employees without regard to the value or character of service rendered. The purely political point of view that, because a municipal corporation is rich and the taxpayers foot the bills, there should be a great many office-holders and employees at high salaries is absolutely untenable.

In almost every large city in the United States there has long been a tendency towards extravagance in the matter of employees. This tendency is due to carelessness and indifference rather than corruption, but it must be corrected. There must be more attention to details of service rendered, and a business-like regulation of salaries, instead of sweeping removals or reductions of pay. The old system of classifying employees throughout all departments of the municipal business into clerks, secretaries, foremen, bookkeepers, etc., of various grades, and fixing arbitrary salaries for each grade throughout, is contrary to every rule and custom that prevails in the regulation of private employment. A clerk in one department, by reason of peculiar or special duties, may be worth twice as much as a clerk of the same grade employed in another department.

The only safe and business-like rule to apply generally in regulating pay in the municipal service is to base each salary upon the extent and responsibility of the work done, and the capacity, experience, and intelligence of the officer or employee. Arbitrary civil-service appointments, promotions, and regulations will invariably decrease the quantity and depreciate the quality of the service rendered. Heads of departments should be permitted to exercise discretion, within a wide latitude, in the matter of promotions, in order that efficient and energetic service may be promptly rewarded by promotion or increased pay. There must be tangible rewards for capable, honest, and intelligent work, and prompt punishment for the shirks and the laggards. The average man who enters municipal em-

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ployment by civil-service appointment soon feels that he is secure in his situation so long as he performs a certain amount of work in a routine way. In such cases there is no incentive to originality or energetic effort, and the public service soon becomes mechanical, slow, and expensive. To sum it all up, the same rules of employment, pay, and promotion that prevail in the service of every great private corporation ought to be adopted in the government of cities. On some of the great railroads of this country, men have risen steadily and rapidly from minor employment to the office of president of the company. In American municipal service a civil employee under present arbitrary regulations may begin as a junior clerk, and in twenty years become a chief clerk or a bookkeeper, and the man who knows just enough to clerk or keep books will rise as rapidly as the one with the ability to make a good chief of a department or mayor of a city. Such a system is unbusiness-like and indefensible.

General estimates of the success or failure of a particular municipal government are too often based upon the financial condition of the city. Such estimates are usually inaccurate. A city may keep right up to the constitutional limitation of indebtedness under safe, conservative, and progressive government. It is not so much what a city spends as what it receives in return for its expenditures that determines good financial management. As a safeguard against possible extravagance and corruption, there must be a fixed limit beyond which a municipality cannot increase its obligations; but whether this limit is provided by a charter or State constitution, it should not be arbitrary in all cases, and may safely be left subject to change to fit new conditions. A constitutional limitation of indebtedness applies, as a rule, to all municipalities in a State, without regard to their commercial or financial conditions or requirements. This is a bad arrangement. A great seaport city like New York, with an enormous water-front that can be converted into a profitable public utility, should not, as a matter of business, be too cramped in the raising of funds to carry on such improvements.

City charters and constitutional restrictions ought to provide different conditions for different classes of debt. Bonds, issued for the development of public utilities that become paying investments, should not be charged against the borrowing capacity of a city. Such a regulation, instead of safeguarding the rights of the taxpayers, is often a handicap upon profitable development. The extent to which the general principle of municipal ownership may be safely and profitably applied is open to discussion, and students of the question differ in their views. Experiments have also produced conflicting results, but it is everywhere conceded that every municipality ought to own an unlimited supply of good water, with the necessary improvements for abundant distribution. This is one of the necessities of urban existence that cannot be neglected, and no municipality can afford to treat the question in any other way than to provide beyond accident for the rights of the people. At the same time, it has been demonstrated in New York and other large cities that abundant water can be supplied to the inhabitants by the local government at less direct cost than by purchase from private ownership, and that the business will in the end yield a profit. Private control of the water supply of a city is not only expensive and unsatisfactory, but the principle is repugnant to every correct idea of good government.

To illustrate the possibilities of proper development of public utilities in large municipalities, the Croton water system in New York has for some years produced ample revenue to pay interest and provide the necessary sinking-fund for all bonds issued to create and maintain the system. The present system can be largely extended, and the increased revenue will, in thirty or forty years, repay all expenditures and leave the great property an interest-bearing investment. Even better results have followed the improvement of the water-front by the city. All the new wharves are leased at rentals sufficient to retire the bonds before they are due. If the city had the constitutional power to issue bonds for the work, it could expend $200,000,000 acquiring water-front and improving dock facilities with the absolute certainty that the increased income from the property would pay interest and retire the bonds in thirty years. At the end of that time the city would own free of debt a property of inestimable value, yielding a large revenue, which would then be applicable to the payment of current expenses and the reduction of taxation. There can be no question of the proposition that

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good government must include some plan of development of public utilities and properties that can be made profitable to a municipality as a whole, and of great value to the commercial interests of the citizens.

The general principle that all special rights, privileges, and franchises in, over, or under the streets and highways of a city are the property of the corporation and the people has at last obtained general recognition in public opinion and at the hands of lawmakers. It does not follow, however, that any considerable number of municipalities will shortly undertake to provide transportation, lighting, or other modern conveniences; but proper government will not prevail until every franchise and special privilege granted to individuals and private corporations is made to yield a revenue based upon its actual earning value. The granting of perpetual franchises must remain an unpleasant memory of the days when American cities were ruled and robbed, not governed. No fixed law or rule can be made for the proper regulation of this important feature of municipal business, but in future the grant of any special privilege will be restricted by contracts and limitations to protect the rights of the people and secure a portion of the general income that may one day supersede all direct taxation.

Cities having undertaken to supplement the work of the States in the matter of free education have assumed a grave responsibility, and the character of the citizenship of the future, as well as the quality of government, depends upon the correct solution of the problem involved. With millions to spend for free schools, there opened a wide field for experiments. The education of the masses is such a popular thing that any person who proposes to contribute a plan or a suggestion to the scheme is certain of a hearing, and too often of opportunity for mischief. A wave of faddism has swept over the country in recent years, and in many cities it has almost engulfed the common schools, that were originally the means of the free education for which property was taxed. The proper government of any municipality requires a prompt return to a system of thorough instruction in the public schools in those studies that are the true base of all higher education. Municipal income does not justify the maintenance of any general system of so-called higher education or the teaching of fads and experiments. If there are high schools, they must be maintained to provide rewards of merit and industry in the common schools, and they ought to include a special course of study preparatory for service in the city government. But the real function and duty of good municipal government is to provide a thorough course of practical study and teaching that will enable the children of the poor to acquire the true foundation of higher education before they are compelled to go to work. The boys and girls who are forced to work at fifteen may, with a little assistance, educate themselves as they toil if they have been thoroughly taught the rudiments of a practical English education. For supplemental knowledge the city can provide the means with night schools, free lectures, libraries, and reading-rooms.

Three other general specifications are essential to good city government. They are intelligence, honesty, and simplicity. To successfully manage the interests of a great municipal corporation the keenest intelligence is necessary. Conditions are constantly changing and new problems arising. The men charged with the responsibility of administration must be able to think and act quickly and make few mistakes. They must, above all things, be progressive, peering into the mists of the future for new landmarks and guide-posts rather than lag irresolute among the unchangeable errors of yesterday. Without moral and political honesty, government becomes dangerous and corrupt. Honesty in the conduct of municipal affairs needs to be positive rather than negative. It must be of that sterling and energetic character that will render and compel faithful and loyal service. There are other ways of robbing a city than stealing money from its treasury. It may be robbed by careless and incompetent work. It may be robbed and permanently injured by inferior skill; and the honest and capable public officer is the one who guards the interests of the people at every point.

The public business of a municipality is the affair of its citizens, and secrecy and circumlocution are not to be tolerated. Let the public business be done in the open, and there must be no fear of opponents and no favor for friends. The proper government of a city is for all its inhabitants, not for the benefit of a party or a faction. The essential text of the system is simplicity and publicity.

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